Multiculturalism and the Economic Agenda in Australia: Adult E.S.L., Overseas Skills Recognition and Anti-Racist Strategies

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACMA	Advisory Council for Multicultural Affairs
ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions
AMEP	Adult Migrant Education Program
AMES	Adult Migrant Education Services
ANAC	Australian Nursing Assessment Council
ASLPR	Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings
CAAIP	Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies
CAE	College of Advanced Education
CATU	Clothing and Allied Trades Union
COPQ	Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications
CTCs	Central Trades Committees of DIR
DEET	Department of Employment, Education and Training
DILGEA	Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs
DIR	Department of Industrial Relations
DL	Distance Learning
DOLAC	Departments of Labour Advisory Committee
ESB	English Speaking Background
ESL	English as Second Language
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
EWP	English in the Workplace
HREOC	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
IARTs	Interviewing, Assessment and Referral Teachers
IEAust	Institute of Engineers, Australia
LTCs	Local Trades Committees of DIR

MES	Main English-Speaking (countries)
MOLAC	Ministers of Labour Advisory Committee
MWRS	Migrant Workers Rights Scheme
NACSR	National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition
NCELTR	National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research
NES	Non-English Speaking
NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
NOOSR	National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition
NTB	National Training Board
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
OMA	Office of Multicultural Affairs
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TRRA	Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act 1946

Introduction

In July 1989, the Hawke Government in Australia announced a new National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia. The Agenda was the result of two years of extensive community consultation, research and development by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, in conjunction with the Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs. Among the highlights of the new Agenda was a promise for more English language training, new processes for recognising overseas qualifications and a campaign against prejudice and racism.

This report examines these three initiatives outlined in the National Agenda and related policy developments undertaken by the Commonwealth Government toward the latter part of the 1980's and early 1990. Part One examines directions taken in English as a Second Language policies for adult immigrants. Part Two examines the obstacles faced by migrants in gaining recognition within Australia of their overseas qualifications, and recent reforms in processes for recognising migrant professional and trades skills. Part Three discusses two national campaigns directed at dealing with racist violence and community relations. It also explores the current involvement of Australian unions in anti-racist issues, as well as the broader issue of representation of migrant workers within union structures and policy.

The National Agenda on Multiculturalism explicitly linked multiculturalism with the economic agenda of the Hawke Labor Government. As will become clear from the findings of this report, there exists a strong relationship between the economic priorities of the Australian Government and multicultural reforms in language training and overseas qualifications recognition processes. The directions taken in the shaping of the priorities in nature and clientele of ESL programs, and the development of models of valuation of overseas competency-

based skills in the place of assessment of 'paper qualifications,' are driven and constrained by labour market reforms.

In the drive to make the Australian economy more internationally competitive, the Hawke Government has since 1986-87, introduced a major program of reforms aimed at restructuring industry, work organization, training systems, union structures and wages policy (Willis, 1988; Dawkins, 1989). Australian trade unions have been major partners to these reforms, many of which have been negotiated through use of the processes of the Prices and Incomes Accord.

As the major objective of these far-reaching reforms is to improve the efficency and productivity of the Australian labour force, efforts are concurrently being made to streamline English language training programs and overseas skills recognition processes in a direction more responsive to the employment-related needs of skilled migrants. Such policy changes are viewed as redressing the significant under-utilization of migrant skills by removing some of the major sources for the unemployment and underemployment of skilled immigrants. As discussed throughout this report (but particularly in Parts One and Three), particular groups of immigrants - especially those who are unskilled or semi-skilled, older and female - are less likely to benefit from the combined economic and multicultural agenda.

Changes in award restructuring are widely acknowledged to lead to the retrenchment of older, less skilled, non-English speaking, and frequently (as in the needle trades) female immigrants. The re-direction of resources in English language programs to new, skilled immigrants is likely to lead to the further marginalization of these segments of the NES immigrant population.

The National Agenda also linked the campaigns to reduce racism and prejudice to "indirect but positive economic benefit". As I argue in Part Three,

the attempt to introduce quantifiable measures (of behaviour) in the community relations strategy has been widely viewed as inappropriate. In this area, the attempt to link multiculturalism to the Austalian Government's economic agenda is unpersuasive and has led to considerable confusion about both objectives and effective strategies.

The research for this report was conducted during the period from October 1989 to February 1990 in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne. It was written during a time of radical change for the economy, industry, trade unions and immigrants in Australia, and just prior to the federal election announced for the end of March 1990. This report reflects some of this turbulence - especially in recording some of the multicultural initiatives that were only in the beginning stages and subject to considerable revision.

Part One: English Language Training for Adults[1]

Current Directions in the Provision of ESL

There are currently a number of different programs for English language training for adults funded by the Commonwealth government and, to a much lesser extent, the State and Territory governments. By far the largest allocation of Commonwealth funds for this purpose occurs through the Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP), which is administered by the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs (DILGEA).

The budget allocations for AMEP over a three year period have been: for 1988/9 $64.572 million, for 1989/90 $71.572m, and (anticipated) for 1990/91 $80.157m (AMEP Management Sub Committee Meeting Briefing Notes, 6-7 December 1989). In 1988, some 60,000 clients participated in courses provided by AMEP.

The Commonwealth's role in AMEP is to plan, fund and co-ordinate the program around Australia while the States and Territories are responsible for detailed implementation and management of service delivery. Service delivery occurs through the Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES) in each State and Territory.

In practice, the providers of AMEP services differ from one state or territory to another. For e.g., in New South Wales (which receives the largest State budget allocation), the largest AMEP provider is the New South Wales Adult Migrant Education Service, which is administered by the Office for the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs. In Victoria, which receives the second largest state allocation, the largest ESL provider is AMES in Victoria, which is part

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[1] Apart from the literature referred to in the text, this part of the report is based on interviews with DILGEA officials and researchers and practitioners in the New South Wales AMES.

of Further Education within the Ministry of Education. In Western Australia and South Australia, the Northern Territory, Tasmania, and the Australian Capital Territory, AMES is administered by Technical and Further Education (TAFE). Finally, in Queensland, there are two AMEP providers: Immigrant Education Services, which is part of the Division of Special Services within the Department of Education, and the Brisbane College of Advanced Education (Economou and Masters, 1989:37-63). The level and types of ESL provision within each State and Territory are affected by the total population size, the proportion of NESB migrants in the total population, the existence of tertiary institutional providers, funds provided by the Commonwealth, and the level of commitment of State/Territory governments.

Seven tertiary institutions are also funded by AMEP to provide courses for migrants requiring more advanced English to enable them to practise their professions or undertake tertiary studies in Australia. For instance, in New South Wales, the University of New South Wales Institute of Languages offers courses on "English for Professional Employment" and "English for Professional Employment for Engineers" (Economou and Masters, 1989:42). Also in New South Wales, the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR) at Macquarie University began in 1989 to offer a course for English for Professional Employment. Ninety-one students, from diverse professions, took this course which was jointly funded by DILGEA and the State government through a labour market program, Skillmax. In 1990, NCELTR will be offering an English language course for teachers (Telephone interview, December 18, 1989).

The initial testing of language proficiency for adults in AMEP generally relies on a language scale such as the "Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings" (ASLPR). The ASLPR describes language behaviour along the developmental

path from zero to "native-like" (level 6). It is designed to measure both proficiency in four separate but conceptually related scales - speaking, listening, reading and writing, as well as "general proficiency" (DILGEA, 1984).

Under AMES policy, new arrivals receive between 600 to 800 hours of English language training during the first 12 months after arrival. It is assumed that these numbers of hours will be sufficient to develop a NES person's English proficiency level from level zero to level one plus (1+) of the ASLPR scale, or the "survival level". According to the ASLPR scale, the minimum level which will enable an NES person to undertake vocational training is level 3 of the scale which corresponds to a level of minimum vocational proficiency. A major problem in ESL provision for migrants has been the absence of provisions for English language training to bridge the proficiency gap between level 1+ and level 2+ or level 3 of the ASLPR scale, except those provided by the mainstream TAFE vocational training programmes (Gatica, 1988:32).

In New South Wales, the NSW AMES rating scale (with 7 levels) is used for assessment purposes and converted to the ASLPR scale for data entry purposes. Economou and Masters summarize the range of procedures used to assess language proficiency across Australia. Interviewing, Assessment and Referral Teachers (IARTs) "in every State devote a great deal of time and skill to the assessment of language proficiency, and utilise a range of assessment procedures in addition to the ASLPR scale. In some States, the four macro-skills are assessed; in others, there is an emphasis on speaking and listening only" (1989:7) The objective of AMEP is to provide an opportunity for all students enrolled in AMES courses "to acquire proficiency in English of at least ASLPR 1+ (and preferably 2) in each of the four macro skills for social and employment purposes" (National Plan 1990-1992:9).

The actual and potential clientele of adult ESL courses varies immensely in terms of years of residence in Australia, age, sex, English proficiency levels, employment status and occupation, country of origin, etc. It is clear, however, that in accordance with the Commonwealth's AMEP National Plan 1990-1992, and State plans such as the NSW AMES Strategic Plan, the AMEP is moving in the direction of offering English language training and related services almost entirely to recently arrived migrants. The AMEP National Plan gives clear priority to "migrants in their first five years of settlement and particularly to those within the first three years" (AMEP National Plan, 1990-1992:6). The anticipated allocative outcome is 80% to people in their first three years of residence in Australia, 10% to people with residence between 3 and 5 years, and 10% to people with residence greater than 5 years.

The change in distributions of AMES clients by years of residence from 1988 to 1989 confirms the trend toward recent residence. In 1989, 80.49% of clients had been resident in Australia for less than 5 years. This is an increase of 4.22% from the 1988 figure of 76.27%. Similarly, 69.84% of clients in 1989 had been resident for less than three years compared to 65.55% in 1988 (AMEP Management Sub Committee Meeting Briefing Notes).

The socio-economic and political trends underlying this new direction derive largely from the Commonwealth government's commitment to structural change in the Australian labour market. The immigration program, labour market policies, settlement, education and training programs, amalgamation in tertiary education institutions, de-regulation in many industries, and award

restructuring[2] are all currently being driven by efforts to improve the productivity and efficiency of the Australian economy and to make Australian products more internationally competitive. A sharper economic focus is evident in both Australia's immigration program, which is bringing in greater numbers of skilled and business immigrants than in the past, and in its settlement policies of which AMEP is an important part (DILGEA, 1989:10-11).

In regard to immigrant settlement services such as AMEP, the emphasis on labour market objectives is apparent in the decision to focus more intensively on new arrivals to Australia, and the development of differential levels of English language service to different clients depending on their respective employment-related needs. In the past, the various providers of AMES responded to client language needs and took in all who met AMEP criteria, without prioritizing clients.

According to Don Plimer, the Director of Language Services for DILGEA, the absence of guidelines for client selection had two outcomes: (1) every teaching centre developed different profiles of client groups, and (2) the high level of demand for ESL and pressures on ESL teachers and services meant that resources

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[2] An "award" is a legal document covering particular industries or jobs which describes the jobs performed and the wages and conditions which apply to these jobs. Some awards, called Federal Awards, are made by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission. Others, called State Awards, are made by the different State Industrial Relations Commissions. Award restructuring currently holds centre stage in Australian industrial relations. The rationale for restructuring the awards is to improve productivity and efficiency in order to make Australian production more internationally competitive. By emphasizing principles such as "structural efficiency", restructuring aims at increasing labour market flexibility through strategies such as multi-skilling, broadbanding (the reduction of occupational classifications in awards from over 300 in some industries to 6-8), and Just In Time (JIT) inventory production systems (Miltenyi, 1988:49-55).

were being thinly spread. AMEP had to exit people too early. By restricting access to new arrivals, AMEP hopes to provide them with a sequence of courses that realistically means they are "labour market ready" (Author interview, November 24, 1989). As an example of development of new guidelines for differential levels of service tied to employment objectives, the National Plan allocates "at least 20% of teaching and client hours to students seeking employment or further study who require a higher level of English competence that ASLPR 2 for these purposes" (p.9).

This new emphasis on services designed to realistically develop "job ready" language proficiency for migrants with professional and trade skills is one strongly encouraged by the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (see below). It helps redress a severe obstacle for migrants seeking jobs commensurate with their skills - i.e., the gap between obtaining recognition for qualifications in some professions and obtaining employment in the profession. John Rowling, Director of the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition, cited engineering as one profession which requires recognition only of professional skills. The fact that the process of skills recognition within engineering does not involve testing of English language skills has resulted in a pool of professional engineers from overseas who are unemployable because of their poor language skills (Author interview with John Rowling, November 9, 1989).

Since the late 1970s, the Commonwealth government has followed a twofold rationale for providing English language training to migrants: for employment and education purposes on the one hand, and for social welfare and "access and equity" principles on the other. The recent definitions of AMEP management objectives signal a clear shift away from services based on social welfare/access

and equity to those focused on employment and employment-related education. The AMEP National Plan states that in order to meet the "language needs of longer term residents who had previously had access to the AMEP", DILGEA will encourage managers of TAFE and higher education, "as well as radio and TV authorities and other government and community organizations to provide or sponsor English language tuition as part of their services to the whole community" (p.6). Trevor Griffiths, Assistant Secretary of Settlement Planning in DILGEA stated that AMEP is no longer re-enrolling longer-term residents. For these longer term residents ("for e.g., women over 50 who want language for 'social' reasons"), DILGEA is "trying to enroll them into less expensive programs" (Author interview, November 24, 1989).

These changes to AMEP have evoked concern among community groups. "A high proportion of representations are concerning women, who have been unable to participate in classes earlier due to child raising/work commitments, and persons over the age of 55" (AMEP Management Sub Committee, December 1989). The change in targeted clientele of AMEP will have an adverse effect on women. Australia-wide, women tend to have somewhat higher rates of participation in AMEP than men among recently-arrived migrants (54.59% of clients with less than 5 years residence in 1989 were female). As period of residence increases, female participation grows at proportionately greater rates than that of males with the same settlement status. In 1989, women represented 62.71% of clients with more than 5 years residence. This pattern of disproportionate female participation with years of residence is even more marked in New South Wales which has the highest proportion of AMEP clients and largest budget allocation (44% of national budget) of all states and territories (Palser and Sandinata, 1989:6).

One factor that deters women's participation in AMEP among recently arrived migrants and well into settlement is the lack of adequate childcare. AMEP's National Plan advocates facilitating "access to learning arrangements by maintaining support services, such as childcare and income support, subject to eligibility and resource limitations" (p.11, my emphasis). There is a clear recognition within AMEP that "current child care provision is inadequate to meet demand and poses a major barrier to the participation of people with childcare needs" (AMEP Management Sub-Committee, December 1989). If one assesses the current resources, even in light of the increase in childcare funding announced in the Multicultural Agenda--from $2.3m in 1988/89 to a projected $3.2m in 1989/90--the prospects seem grim for eliminating this major barrier to women's participation in AMEP. "Resource constraints...preclude the expansion of AMEP centre based child care" (Ibid.) Moreover, AMEP clients are competing with the wider community for mainstream childcare placements. AMEP clients do, however, fall within several "priority target groups" for government assistance--for e.g., low income, seeking employment, NESB (Ibid.)

In order to deal with some of the issues raised by the new guidelines within AMEP, a Working Party on Post-Secondary English as a Second Language has been struck which brings together officials at the Commonwealth level from DILGEA, the Department of Employment and Education, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, and state officials in corresponding departments. From the few meetings which have been held of the Working Party, two major issues have arisen. First, given that AMEP is substantially decreasing language services for longer-term residents, there is a need to work out the respective funding responsibilities of DILGEA and DEET for these services. DILGEA's position is that DEET and other agencies should look after the education needs of long-term migrants. This

argument obtains qualified support from the position adopted by the influential CAAIP (Fitzgerald) Report (1988). "In recommending the handing over of responsibility for delivery of educational services from DILGEA to DEET, Fitzgerald made the distinction between 'immediate settlement needs' to be met by DILGEA and 'longer term vocational needs' to be met by DEET" (Palser and Sandinata, 1989:3; CAAIP, 1988:62).

DEET's position is that it is labour-market oriented and that therefore DILGEA should provide services to all migrants, regardless of period of residence in Australia. Indeed, DEET's position also obtains some support from the above-quoted argument by the CAAIP Report insofar as it reflects a "narrowing interpretation of longer term needs from the more broad-based notion of 'settlement' to those related to vocation" (Palser and Sandinata, 1989:3). Palser and Sandinata argue, however, that a large proportion of the AMES longer-term resident clientele have ESL needs that are "compatible with DEET's education and training objectives of increasing the skill level, flexibility and productivity of the Australian labour force. Approximately 80 per cent of the total fall into DEET's ambit by virtue of their employment status as well as their vulnerable position in the labour market" (1989:38).

While DEET has claimed that existing programs (such as English in the Workplace) will cater to demands of non-English speaking workers, this seems unrealistic given that (1) English in the Workplace is already stretched in coping with current demands for workplace ESL (see the discussion below on EWP); and (2) the work-related language needs of long-term residents have expanded and become more specific as a result of award restructuring changes which has entailed new work patterns and organization, new technology, revision of job classifications, multi-skilling and skill-related career paths. "The great

proportion of NESB people affected by these changes in manufacturing, construction and the service industry will be those longer-term residents who went straight into employment on-arrival" (Palser and Sandinata, 1989:36). Palser and Sandinata suggest that given that DEET has committed $5.1m over three years to support curriculum development associated with award-restructuring, "AMES must make a bid for these development funds if it hopes to respond in an appropriate fashion to the changes underway" (1989:37-38).

The current climate of vocationally oriented adult education and labour market restructuring renders vulnerable those (male and female) immigrants who have been marginalised in non-English speaking (NES) enclaves in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs; and women whose participation in adult ESL has been hindered by child raising/work commitments. Many immigrant women, long-term residents in Australia, with limited educational attainments, take English classes for "enrichment" purposes such as the development of self-esteem and break down of social isolation. As Palser and Sandinata argue, "There is a risk that participation [in adult ESL] of this kind is trivialised. Like most areas of education where women predominate, such courses are considered marginal or an add-on to mainstream endeavour. Adult ESL is no exception" (1989:21).

Adult ESL programs, which cannot be justified to any great extent on economic grounds, but which are invaluable in their contribution to both personal and community development, are currently at risk. On the one hand, AMEP has become more focused on the teaching of English as linked with skills recognition, skills upgrading or bridging for recent arrivals. And on the other, DEET's priorities reflect the current climate of vocationally oriented adult education, thus accounting for its resistance to the directing of resources toward adult ESL programs with non-economic educational objectives.

A second issue which has dominated discussions within the Working Party on Post-Secondary ESL pertains to the funding of English language training within vocational training. DILGEA's position is that AMEP should not pay for vocational ESL training. AMEP defines its role as providing English so that recently-arrived migrants are accepted into either employment or university. But once migrants have been accepted, the responsibility for funding further vocational language training should not fall onto AMEP. There are currently several courses offered which provide joint vocational and language training requiring interdepartmental coordination--for e.g., in the hospitality sector. The Working Party is currently trying to find successful models for coordination of such programs.

In order to illustrate some of the key issues surrounding a range of AMEP-funded ESL programs catering to different client groups, the following discussion will examine three types of programs: the Home Tutor scheme, the Distance Learning program, and English in the Workplace. All three programs are part of the External Programs within AMES (although English in the Workplace(EWP), under various names, has also been administered by other providers). These various programs attest to the diversification of service delivery by the Adult Migrant Education Service which is a response to the diverse needs among a heterogeneous migration of NESB people to Australia (Castles, Morrissey and Pinkstone, n.d.:48). As all three programs are primarily geared to meet the language needs of lesser priority groups within AMEP (i.e., longer-term residents, not immediately geared to the labour market, or already employed), they currently receive a small proportion of AMEP funds. Moreover, at least two of the three programs (Home Tutor and EWP) are being targeted for alternative funding and/or review.

External Programs Within AMES

The Home Tutor Scheme

The Home Tutor Scheme finds its precursors in programs existing since the mid-1940s which arose out of the "Good Neighbour" movement. The vast majority of clients in this program are women - 84% of Home Tutor students in New South Wales (see Table 1, Appendix 1) and an estimated 85% in all of Australia. The Home Tutor Scheme is a response to "the needs of migrants who are unable to go out to classes but who are nonetheless motivated to improve their general ability to communicate in English" (NSW AMES, n.d.)

The AMEP National Plan views the scheme "as a means of reaching isolated people (particularly women) including those who have been in Australia for more than 5 years but who have not accessed the AMEP for family and related cultural reasons" (p.21). In May 1989, 35% of Home Tutor clients had resided in Australian for 5 or more years. The groups who were the largest clients were those born in Asia (37.6%) and those born in the Middle East (31.4%). The majority of clients were not in the workforce (64.1%) or unemployed (16.1%) (See Table 1, Appendix 1).

The perceived outcomes of the Home Tutor scheme are seen to be "more in confidence- than in language gain, experiential learning (going to the post office and posting letters, going shopping)" (Author interview with Barbara Marshall, November 28, 1989). The program is imbued with "welfare overtones", and is geared toward aiding participants to learn about wider services (Author interview with Don Plimer, November 24, 1989).

In 1989, approximately 4,000 students were enrolled in the program across Australia, with 1236 of those registered in New South Wales (See Table 1). The

demand for the course exceeds available places. In NSW, 360 people were waiting to be enrolled in the program.

AMEP provides about $600,000 in 1989 to the Home Tutor Scheme and the program depends heavily on volunteer tutors. In the NSW AMES, there are 7 full-time staff who administer the Home Tutor Scheme--6 full-time teachers and 1 assistant principal. The role of the teachers is to run training courses for tutors, supervise and engage in assessment and referral of learners, match tutors and learners, provide professional support to tutors, and organize manual systems for information retrieval. The training of tutors varies across the four NSW AMES offices, and involves 4 to 6 sessions including follow-up.

The fact that the tutors, whose voluntary labour is central to the program, are not trained teachers in itself reflects the limitations of the Home Tutor Scheme as a language training course. The lack of teaching credentials among the tutors means that they cannot do formalized assessments of students. This issue is mentioned in a recent report on educational placement and referral in the AMEP. Economou and Masters point out that in Victoria and in other States, all on-course assessment is carried out by volunteer tutors. "This raises the issue of whether it is appropriate for volunteers to assess English language proficiency and student progress, and to set further language learner objectives" (1989:34).

Union regulations have guided the adoption of the title, "tutor" rather than "teacher" and the definition of the home tutor's role--"to assist people to learn English" rather than the "teaching of English". The reliance on a report-back system, forms completed by tutors, has resulted in the institution of unsystematic and unstandardized means of assessing the learner outcomes of the Scheme. The Principal for External Programs at NSW AMES said that only about

50 per cent of tutors complete the learner reports. Currently, there is no data base for students in the Home Tutor scheme, although the NSW AMES is moving toward assessment on the basis of "performance objectives" (for e.g., can the student post a letter, shop, go to a class, etc.?)

According to the Principal of External Programs in the NSW AMES, volunteers in the Home Tutor Scheme tend to be "over 40, 95% women, a few students who get a credit in some university education courses, those with a religious commitment who want to make a contribution to multicultural Australia, those who want to convert Muslims, people directed from volunteer centres, people with problems and out of the workforce" (Author interview with Barbara Marshall, November 28, 1988). The Director of Language Services in DILGEA, who is also a past director of the NSW AMES, stated that a concerted effort had been made to change the profile of the home tutors in part by recruiting Diploma in English students, who would gain from the involvement in the Scheme in their practise teaching (Author interview with Don Plimer, November 24, 1984).

There has as yet been no attempt to formally asses the effectiveness of the program. The marginal position of the Home Tutor scheme both to ESL training programs, and more specifically to AMES, is reflected in this summary statement by Economou and Masters: "The issues identified in this program were the lack of information within and beyond AMES regarding the Scheme, as well as the lack of any efficient means of gathering information about AMES programs for referral purposes" (1989:40, emphasis added).

The Distance Learning Program

In 1988, a new distance learning course, "It's over to You" was introduced within AMEP. This course was designed to help adult migrants learn English independently, without face-to-face contact with a teacher. People enrolled in

the course are learning 'at a distance' from a teacher usually out of necessity, because they are isolated for a variety of reasons such as shift work, family commitments, or psychological barriers to participation in a classroom. Currently almost all students are English language beginners. The course is designed to assist learners to develop the skills they need to become independent and self-directed learners and to encourage ESL learners to access community resources.

There are two stages to the program. Stage 1 is for beginners and is aimed at developing language skills equivalent to 1+ on the Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings, and as importantly, the skills needed to learn 'at a distance.' Stage 2 extends these skills and helps learners to move further along with English to a "pre-intermediate" stage (2.5 on the ASLPR). Initial interviews are generally conducted by telephone with distance learning staff and/or State-designated personnel in distance locations, for the purpose of language assessment, determination of long-term goals, and availability/ suitability for this learning activity mode, determining learner pathways, and familiarizing clients with course operations and expectations. Although some of the staff are bilingual, the NSW AMES has identified limited access to bilingual support at the initial interview stage as a difficulty that could be overcome by further recruitment of bilingual teachers or assistants (Economou and Masters, 1989:41).

In undertaking this course, the learner is taking responsibility for her own learning. In practical terms, this means the freedom to set her own time, place and pace of learning. The program is meant to encourage awareness and use of possibilities for language learning outside a structured course and without the presence of a teacher. The materials--which include course guides available

in 35 languages, booklets (with colour-coded listening, speaking, reading and writing units) and audio cassettes--are flexibly arranged, catering to learners with uneven skill development. Testing of students occurs primarily through Sendback exercises. The students are required to be literate in their own languages and to have a telephone, cassette player, and $25 enrolment fee.

The program is still in the developmental stage. There are approximately 4,000 students enrolled in the program across Australia. Publicity for the program has occurred through advertisements in Chinese newspapers, radio advertisements in several different languages, and publicity at the AMES centres and at meetings with ethnic community organizations.

The NSW AMES has 252 students enrolled in the program. As there is a long waiting list for the program, "publicity has been temporarily delayed" (NSW AMES, 1989:13). Students have a high incompletion rate. The reasons given for discontinuing the program include work commitments, attendance at classes, financial problems, new baby and child care, and involvement in family business (NSW AMES, 1989:1).

In the NSW AMES, the distance learning program has been staffed with 6 full-time teachers. Two of the teachers had been funded under the National Language Policy to work 1/2 time on the Stage 1 preparatory package, so the program has the equivalent of five full-time teachers working on it. This gives a staff to student ratio of 1 to 50.

Distance learning also depends heavily on Home Tutor support. Home tutors serve in two capacities: as Dial-a-Conversation tutors (whereby tutors take phone calls from DL students who are encouraged in this way to practise their English) or as distance learning supervisors.

A full scale evaluation of the program will be conducted in 1991. The funds allocated to Distance Learning in 1990 are $0.67m. A Distance Learning program for learners at a more advanced stage of English proficiency (between 2 and 4 on the ASLPR) is currently being developed. This program will be Distance Learning by Video and will include video cassettes, audio cassettes and work books. The content of this program will focus on work performed by people in different occupations. Currently there is a gap in Distance Learning for clients at ALSPR level 1+ to 2, the level when language needs start to diversify. As mentioned earlier, this gap exists more broadly in both AMES and TAFE course provision and is a major deterrent in the ability of NESB migrants to obtain jobs that match their overseas skills and experience (Economou and Masters, 1989:43).

English in the Workplace (EWP)

English in the Workplace classes have existed in Australia since 1947 and were introduced into the AMEP in 1973. Until 1985, these courses were known as "Courses in Industry" and were aimed at providing unskilled and semi-skilled NESB employees with basic English language tuition (Miltenyi, 1989:5). The principles underlying the early EWP programs were "equality of opportunity" and "access and equity" for non-English speaking workers whose low levels of English language proficiency were viewed as hindering training and promotion opportunities, as well as posing health and safety risks. During the early 1980s, there was an important philosophical shift in the reasons given to justify the introduction of English in the Workplace. Economic and industrial rationales for EWP became current. Employers emphasized the productivity, efficiency and profit-enhancing benefits of English language training. Trade unions began to argue for English in the Workplace as an industrial right.

The major vehicles for the shift in employer, union, and government views on English in the Workplace were industry restructuring and award restructuring. The current economic agenda of the Commonwealth is aimed at introducing various strategies to make the labour market more flexible in the interest of increasing industrial competitiveness in both the national and international markets. As stated by the Ethnic Liaison Officer for the Trades and Labor Council of West Australia, "All of the key industries targeted for award restructuring have high concentrations of overseas-born workers from non-English speaking (NES) source countries. Many are older with either low or unrecognized trade skills, and with insufficient literacy skills in the English language which will [hinder their participation] in training and career development (Gatica, 1988:29). The heavy concentration of NESB persons in manufacturing industry is evident in Table 2 (See Appendix 1). 30.1% of NES males are employed in manufacturing in comparison with 21.7% of those from main English-speaking countries (MES) and 17.3% Australian born. 25.7% NES females are in manufacturing in comparison with only 11.4% MES and only 8.9% Australian born.

In employment terms, the restructuring of the manufacturing sector has taken place at the expense of migrant workers. "Between 1982 and 1987, total employment of migrants in manufacturing fell by 52,500. During the same period, employment of Australian born persons actually increased by 52,500" (Castles, Morrissey and Pinkstone, n.d.:16). One industrial sector sustaining major job losses through restructuring was that comprised by the textile, clothing and footwear industries, whose workforce is in the majority NESB women: the number of jobs dropped from approximately 165,000 in 1972/73 to approximately 110,000 by 1988 (Sonja Laverty, FECCA Congress Report, 1988:88). Similarly, the metal industry and motor vehicle industry, both major employers of NESB male migrants,

have had large losses in their workforces as a result of industrial restructuring. The unions representing employees in each of these manufacturing industries have seen their membership rapidly shrink. Thus, the shaping of policies that are responsive to the needs of their largely NESB workforce--such as English in the Workplace--can be seen to be in the interests of these unions' survival.

Overall, "most unions have been slow to respond to the special needs of non-Anglophone immigrants" (Lever-Tracy and Quinlan, 1988:148). Union involvement in promoting English in the workplace varies considerably. Some unions have responded to the needs of their membership for English Language Training and have lobbied for it with employers. George Papadopoulos, Chairperson of the Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission suggested that the greatest inroads are being made in those unions which now have a significant bilingual, NESB migrant leadership (Author interview, December 8, 1989). Other unions have been less responsive and "in some cases determinedly disinterested in the needs of workers from NESB. This is hardly surprising given that the workers in the union movement can be seen as a microcosm of the broader society with the full complement of views and attitudes to workers from NESB" (Durie, n.d.:9).

The reasons for the slow response to NESB concerns within many unions in part is accounted for by their under-representation in influential union posts. The reasons for the failure of non-Anglophones to secure leadership positions in the upper echelons of the labour movement are complex (and will be discussed further in Part Three). They include language barriers, cultural barriers, racism, the complexity of Australian industrial relations, and compulsory

unionism which decreased the incentive of union leaders to mobilize NES worker involvement (Lever-Tracy and Quinlan, 1988:117-166).

NESB workers are involved in a vicious cycle in which their poor English proficiency hinders their influence over union action in introducing EWP, which in turn might improve their communication skills and increase their union participation. A survey by Palser (1984) of 438 NESB employees in the NSW State Rail and Urban Transit Authorities explores this relationship between English language proficiency and union participations. When asked whether communication problems hindered their participation in eleven workplace activities, respondents ranked "taking part in union meetings" as by far the most common situation where they experienced communication problems (1984:48).

While lack of English has long been acknowledged as a barrier to equality of NES migrants at work, in unions, and in the community, award restructuring has led to a greater awareness of the need for workplace ESL programs among both unions and employers. Indeed, Francis and Cleland argue that "there is little doubt that workplace English-language and literacy/basic education programs will need to respond to an avalanche of requests as the current award restructure program proceeds" (n.d.:3). This is because poor English proficiency is a significant barrier to further training, and participation in new career paths - processes that award restructuring are purportedly encouraging. Many workers have survived and functioned in workplaces within the clothing industry, state rail and urban transit authorities, vehicle builders and glass works, etc., with little of no English language skills. As Palser (1984:20) argues, this is not attributable to the recency of arrival of NES migrant workers, but rather because of the narrow industrial and occupational distribution of certain language groups in the labour market.

The potential for upward mobility into higher-level jobs promised by award restructuring is problematic for workers with poor English skills. Poor English proficiency poses problems for workers in terms of skills assessment, training, and promotion into jobs at higher skill levels for which English language and communication skills are necessary. These are issues which individual unions are just beginning to grapple with in a tangible way.

Current ACTU policy on English in the workplace urges State Branches and affiliates to actively campaign for the insertion of paid leave English language training provisions into awards. Since 1983, unions have successfully negotiated English language training leave provisions either by award variation, or more commonly by agreement, in N.S.W., Victoria, S.A. and W.A. mainly in the public sector (Gatica, 1988:33).

A path-breaking development for the union definition of EWP as an industrial right occurred in March 1985 when the workers covered by the Water and Sewerage Employees Union at the NSW Metropolitan Water Board won English-on-the job in their industrial award. In NSW, 36 state Awards have been varied to include the right to learn English. In September 1987, a second landmark decision on English on the job came from the Full Bench of the West Australian Industrial Commission which upheld a ruling that language classes for non-English speaking workers were an industrial matter, and should be held in working hours.[3]

In West Australia, there are now 35 award variations lodged with the commission pending ratification. If ratified, every blue collar government in

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[3] "In this historic ruling, the Full Bench rejected an appeal by the Western Australian Government against an earlier decision for English classes on the job awarded to the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union on behalf of Water Authority workers" (Collins, 1988:138).

W.A. will have provision for English language tuition in their awards (Schroder, n.d.:3). This is an important gain for NES public sector employees in West Australia. Without mandatory guidelines, it is unlikely that management in the W.A. public sector would have introduced English in the Workplace. A recent study of public sector employers in West Australia revealed that, "while the majority of interviewees responded positively when asked whether they believed English language tuition would benefit management/worker communication, most were not in favour of English in the workplace" (Stretton, 1987:39). Miltenyi notes that while the Commonwealth government has supported the English in the workplace program, "as an employer the Commonwealth has refrained from granting the right to English classes for its employees...The Commonwealth's support for these classes is in doubt when its own employees are not entitled to attend" (1988:36).

There are no award variations for English in the Workplace in Victoria or South Australia, although within both these states unions have successfully negotiated English language training leave provisions on the basis of agreements (Ibid.)

In 1989, an estimated 3,000 students were enrolled in EWP courses across Australia. This represents a reduction in enrolments in comparison with past years. The number of classes has decreased in the private sector to 30% of total class hours available through the AMEP program (Miltenyi, 1988:63).

Improvements in the nature of the courses offered through AMEP include an increase in the number of course hours, and course content and class organization showing greater sensitivity to the disparity of proficiency levels and needs among participants (Miltenyi, 1989:5). According to the Ethnic Liaison Officer for the Victorian Trades Hall Council, "the major difficulty identified in the operation of these classes was securing release" (Schroder, 1989:2). A concrete

instance of this occurred in a Nissan plant located in Clayton, Victoria where workers taking EWP were pulled out of English language training to meet the production demands of a speed-up on the line (Author interview with Paul Schroder, December 8, 1989).

The major provider of EWP courses is AMES. TAFE also conducts classes through its Basic Education in the Workplace program, in some cases in conjunction with AMES (as at the Jolimont rail yards in Victoria). In the AMES EWP courses, teachers' salaries and teaching materials come out of the AMEP budget. The courses are run for a minimum of 100 hours. Some may extend to 200 hours as the need is defined. AMES requires that courses are conducted at the worksite, in paid time, usually within normal working hours (Victoria AMES English in the Workplace pamphlet). EWP course content focuses on basic work-related communication, occupational health and safety, and some awareness of rights and entitlements (Miltenyi, 1989:5).

Within the total AMEP budget ($71.572m in 1989/90), the allocation to English in the Workplace ($0.4m for 1990) represents a negligible percentage. The increase in funding for EWP announced in the Multicultural Agenda cannot be read as an increased commitment to stable Commonwealth funding to EWP in light of the fact that these funds "are intended to catalyse increased contribution to ELT from industry in line with award restructuring initiatives" (AMEP Management Sub Committee Meeting Briefing Notes, 6-7 December 1989).

The ACTU has had an official policy on paid leave for English language training since 1981. Current ACTU policy states that all award negotiations should include "recognition of the significance of English language training specifically, and literacy and numeracy training, generally" (ACTU Executive Decision, March 1989). Several unions, however, are ambivalent about the

inclusion of EWP and negotiated paid leave in their awards. A recurrent theme which arises in discussions with union officials and EWP providers is the resentment and open hostility expressed by co-workers of NES workers whose attendance at EWP courses is perceived as "preferential treatment", a "paid holiday", proof that migrants are "bludgers" (lazy), etc. Palser's (1984) study of EWP in the New South Wales State Rail and Urban Transit Authorities confirmed that co-worker and supervisor hostility to EWP programs deterred NES worker participation. Fifty-five per cent of interviewed NES workers expressed their fear that workmates would complain about NES taking EWP courses and would view it as "special treatment for migrants." The Federal Secretary of the Clothing and Allied Trades Union conveyed that "both officials and trade union members oppose special interests being granted to specific groups of workers" (Author interview with Anna Booth, November 16, 1989). Thus, one argument is that incorporating English in the Workplace into the award singles out NESB workers and creates barriers between NESB workers, and other workers with literacy problems. Those who make this argument maintain that training should be a right for all union members.

Award restructuring also raises the question of whether ESL training should be integrated into the overall employer contribution to the national training effort. The question of who should pay for English in the Workplace is one of the issues currently being debated by the Working Party on Adult ESL, with the Commonwealth Government favouring the introduction of cost recovery measures based on user-pays principles (AMEP National Plan, 1989:19). A recent consultant's report to DILGEA advocates that total cost recovery is desirable and should be phased in over three years (Miltenyi, 1989). Miltenyi argues that productivity increases will come with improved communication in the workplace

and that "there is little market resistance to paying for teachers' fees." In sharp contrast to these views that EWP will have a direct effect on productivity, especially in the case of linguistically isolated NES workers, and that employers are willing to support and pay for EWP are the findings in Stretton's (1987) and Palser's (1984) research. Palser found that managers and supervisors were not enthusiastic about the potential benefits that English classes for migrant employees would bring to the workplace, and felt that the problems associated with running EWP classes would outweigh the benefits (1984:70).

Opposition has also been expressed within the labour movement to full cost recovery on the grounds that it would erode accepted union principles for EWP such as time release and the provision of classes to workers who have traditionally had little access to training programs.[4] The argument made is that, "few employers will opt to support education programs for low literacy and NESB employees ahead of the enterprise's immediate technical training needs...Although long term productivity increases may offset costs, short term considerations are often of greater significance to management" (Francis and Cleland, n.d.) Ironically, the consultant who in 1989 was advocating "user pays" for the funding of EWP, in 1988 argued that, "if this strategy was applied to English in the workplace programs,...it could seriously detract from employer willingness to provide classes...The additional financial burden on employers may well deter some from commencing classes and may motivate others to abandon them" (Miltenyi, 1988:63).

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[4]"There is already some evidence of the erosion of this principle. An increasing number of companies want to adopt what they call the 'Ford model' of one hour in paid work time and one hour in workers' own time. Recently some enterprises have rejected classes because they see paid worker time during classes as just too expensive" (Francis and Cleland, n.d.)

Part of the Government's rationale for recovery of EWP costs by charging employers is that employers would gain in productivity increases from the improved communication developed from EWP. Indeed, in the private sector, particularly in large and medium size companies employing large proportions of NES workers, employers have recognized the value of introducing on-the-job English language for productivity and efficiency reasons. On-the-job ESL training has become part of human resource development policies in B.H.P., G.M.H., NISSAN, KRAFT and a number of medium and small size companies across States (See Appendix 1 for a list of participating organizations in EWP.)

The Commonwealth's efforts to address the economic benefits of English in the Workplace have entailed efforts to calculate and publicize the costs of poor English skills to the Australian economy. In June 1989, a journalist for the Business Review Weekly used the estimate of costs to employers of low English proficiency per worker from research on EWP in three Australian workplaces and applied that figure to the estimated number of English illiterates in the Australian workforce (Business Review Weekly, June 2, 1989:72-74). The figure of $3.2 billion per year resulting from this calculation--the estimated cost to industry of poor English language skills--was cited in the National Agenda. It should be noted that the methodology used to arrive at this figure was severely flawed and during my consultations, the figure of $3.2 billion was described by several public servants as "pure fiction." First, the figures pertaining to the hours gained through improved language skills per worker per year were based on estimates of time savings supplied by managers in three firms. These ranged from 115 hours in one firm, to 154-275 in another. That such estimates based on perceptions of management cannot be relied upon is underscored in Palser's (1984) and Stretton's (1987 research which showed that managers are frequently not aware

of the communication problems of their NES workforce, especially when the work itself has been performed for years with little or no use of English language skills. Second, the figure of $2920 derived from multiplying number of hours (150) in lost time per worker by estimated hourly savings was then applied to the estimated number of English illiterates in the Australian workforce (1.1 million) rather than the estimated number of NES workers with no or poor English proficiency.

In the first national survey of adult English literacy in Australia, 1.2% of the sample of 1500 adults were judged to have severely limited literacy skills (e.g., as manifested in an inability to sign their name on a bankcard) (Wickert, 1989:9). About half of this 1.2 per cent were from non-English speaking backgrounds (Wickert, 1989:9). Other findings in this survey suggested that NES workers experienced particular difficulty in fulfilling tasks requiring reading and writing skills and that they perceived their poor English reading and writing skills as having held them back in their jobs to a greater extent than ESB respondents (Wickert, 1989:40).[5] Nonetheless, many of the results from this survey suggest that,

> Care should be taken not to assume that a disproportionate number of adults with literacy problems are from non-English speaking backgrounds. Low

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[5] For e.g., "nine percent of non-English speaking born people who attempted to circle the expiry date on a drivers' licence were unable to do so, compared with 3 per cent of the English speaking born sample. Twenty-nine per cent of non-English speaking born people who attempted to locate 'gross pay to date' on a pay slip failed to do so compared with 15 per cent of the English speaking born sample...[More generally,] the mean scores on the non-English speaking born sample are lower than the mean scores for the English speaking on each literacy dimension; 11 points lower on document, 12 points lower on prose and 15 points lower on quantitative" (Wickert, 1989:36).

levels of schooling, low levels of skill, low levels of health and other indicators of poverty are also indicators of low levels of literacy among all adult Australians. Excluding the non-English speaking born from the survey had little impact on the average scores (Wickert, 1989:49).

It should be noted, however, that the sample design for this survey screened out potential respondents if the interviewer believed an interpreter would have been needed to conduct the interview, a process that would undoubtedly have lead to the underestimation of the impact of being NESB for English literacy (Wickert, 1989:51). George Miltenyi, a labour relations consultant, estimates that "approximately 70% of adult literacy clients are of NESB" but does not provide evidence or a source to support this figure (Miltenyi, 1989).[6]

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[6]The Australian Bureau of Statistics has not yet been able to develop a reliable method of identifying English language proficiency levels in the four macroskills of reading, writing, speaking and understanding. The best measure of English proficiency used by A.B.S. in the Australian Censuses is on the ability of respondents to <u>speak</u> English only (Gatica, 1988:31). According to the 1981 Australian Census, 110,300 workers were categorized as speaking no English or having only poor English proficiency (Collins, 1988:146).

Part Two: Recognition of Overseas Qualifications[1]

Nature and Scope of the Problem of Non-recognition

The problems encountered by skilled migrants in Australia in gaining recognition of their overseas qualifications, and in obtaining employment commensurate with their skills and education, have been well-documented in a number of recent government and academic studies.[2] The magnitude of the loss to the migrants, their communities, and the Australian economy stemming from non-recognition and under-utilization of overseas skills is particularly great when one considers that Australia has a larger percentage of its population born overseas than any other developed economy, with the exception of Israel. Moreover, while the skill level of immigrants to Australia has not matched that of post-war migration to Canada, the skill level of Australian migrants has been

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[1]This chapter relies on interviews with DIR and DEET officials in Canberra, and with Robyn Iredale, currently Director of Research in the federal Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission in Sydney.

[2]The most significant federal investigation examining problems encountered by migrants in gaining recognition in the professions and trades was the Fry Committee of Inquiry into the Recognition of Overseas Qualifications which produced the Fry Report (1983). The most comprehensive piece of academic research in the area is Robyn Iredale's PhD thesis of 1986, published as Wasted Skills: Barriers to Migrant Entry To Occupations in Australia, by the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales in 1987 (see also Iredale, 1988, 1989). The Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies, the Fitzgerald Committee (1988) highlighted the fact that little progress had been made in reforming the fragmented and discriminatory system of recognition. As a result of the Fitzgerald Committee's Report, the Minister of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs called upon his advisory body, the National Population Council to establish a Working Party for the purpose of developing a model of reform of procedures to accredit immigrant skills (NPC, 1988). Two recent reports, commissioned by the Bureau of Immigration Research, a professional research body set up within DILGEA, have examined the problems encountered by migrants seeking recognition in the trades (Castles et al., 1989) and professions (Mitchell, Tait and Castles, 1989).

steadily rising (Iredale, 1989:89). Indeed, the skill and formal education levels of the immigrant workforce have been consistently higher, on average, than that of the Australian-born workforce (Castles et al., 1989:1).[3]

There are no comprehensive statistics available on the numbers of migrants unable to have their vocational skills recognized. The National Population Council, which advises the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs estimated in 1988 that between 7,500 and 10,000 people each year fail to gain recognition of qualifications each year. This range of estimates was based on the Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications (COPQ) and Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act (TRRA) outcomes. This represents between 10 and 15 percent of labour force migrants each year (National Population Council, 1988:10).[4] The pool of migrants in Australia who have failed to gain recognition of their skills and never returned to their pre-migration occupations is estimated to be more than 200,000 since 1969 (Dawkins, 1989:4).

Given the absence of a data base from which to calculate the economic costs of unrecognized migrant qualifications, Commonwealth policy documents have acknowledged the impossibility of precisely measuring these costs (Dawkins, 1989:4). Nonetheless, "the annual loss from the wasted community investment in

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[3]A national survey carried out on behalf of the Office of Multicultural Affairs between October 1988 and February 1989 provided confirmation of the relatively high levels of education of migrants, especially the recently arrived. "While only 18.2 per cent of the general population with a qualification have a bachelor or higher degree, the figure is 23.8 per cent for NESB migrants and 38.5 per cent for recent arrivals" (Mitchell, Tait and Castles, 1989:11).

[4]Tregillis, who conducted a Review of the Operations of the Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act, claims that the NPC Working Party had overstated the problem of non-recognition of migrants in the TRRA trades (1989:4).

overseas skills is estimated to be in the order of $100 million to $350 million" (Ibid). According to John Rowlings, Director of the National Office for Overseas Skills Recognition, the calculations (which are not public, but Cabinet material) are based on foregone income, including taxes lost and income support to the unemployed. Robyn Iredale, Research Director for the Human Rights Commission, who has done the most comprehensive research on overseas qualifications, expressed her opinion that the oft-cited figure of $250 million per year loss was too conservative.

First, it does not sufficiently take into account the human capital invested in each migrant with overseas qualifications. Second, the figure was based on the numbers of migrants who had attempted to obtain recognition through COPQ; given that only a portion of professional migrants come into contact with COPQ, COPQ's assessments would under-represent the total number of migrants with unrecognized and under-utilized overseas skills (Author interview, October 17, 1989). The recent national survey commissioned by the Office of Multicultural Affairs lent credence to this view in that it found that less than half of the immigrant respondents with qualifications had applied for assessment or recognition (Mitchell, Tait and Castles, 1989:11).

Historically, the success in obtaining recognition of overseas professional and trades skills has varied by country of origin. The majority of English-speaking migrants have gained recognition of their overseas qualifications while only around half of those from non-English speaking countries have been able to return to their pre-migration occupations (Iredale, 1989:90). Research conducted in the mid- and late-1980s suggests that this bias, as well as one which favours Europeans over non-Europeans, continues to prevail in processes of recognition of overseas qualification of both professionals and tradespersons (Iredale, 1987;

Castles et al., 1989:39). Given the trend toward declining immigration from the UK and Ireland (down from 27% of total migration in 1977 to 19% in 1988) and increasing immigration from Asian countries (up from 15% of total migration in 1977 to almost 34% in 1988), these iniquitous outcomes in the recognition of overseas qualifications are of growing concern to the migrant communities and the Australian government (Iredale, 1989:88).

Since 1988, the Commonwealth Government has embarked on a broad strategy for reform of current arrangements for the recognition of overseas qualifications, largely in response to major developments in industrial relations - i.e, the restructuring of major awards and the introduction of competency-based trade training. These reforms are summed up in the position paper circulated by J.S. Dawkins, the Minister for Employment, Education and Training in April 1989:

> Key elements of this strategy will include new and more open procedures for qualifications recognition; the promotion of consistent national standards and competency-based approaches to assessment; improved access to remedial and bridging courses; and stronger links with the Overseas Qualification Recognition Units established by State and Territory Governments. As a complement to these measures the Government will also shortly be announcing administrative reforms of the Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act (Dawkins, 1989:53).

Part Two addresses the recent policy, administrative and procedural reforms adopted by the Commonwealth Government whose objectives are to improve recognition processes and more fully utilize migrants' skills. In order to comprehend the substance of these reforms, a brief discussion of barriers to recognition and employment of skilled migrants is warranted. The barriers faced

by immigrants to recognition of their overseas skills, training and experiences can be classified under three categories: (a) problems associated with the recognition system; (b) problems of information provision and counselling services for the overseas trained; and (c) problems of inadequate bridging/ retraining courses.

Barriers to Gaining Recognition

(a) Problems Associated with the Recognition System

All of the investigations and studies carried out on recognition of overseas qualifications in Australia over the last decade point out the complexity, slowness, fragmented and discriminatory nature, and the iniquitous and inefficient outcomes of the accreditation processes (Fry Report, 1983; Iredale, 1987, 1988, 1989; CAAIP, 1988:53; NPC Working Party, 1988; Castles et al., 1989). Australia, compared to most other countries, has a very highly regulated labour market. Moreover, the amount of regulation of occupations through licensing and registration has been increasing, a process which Iredale (1988:20) argues is linked to the growth of 'professionalism' in many occupations.

The two reasons most frequently given for regulation of entry to skilled occupations are the need to safeguard public health and safety, and the need to guarantee high standards of work to the public. Iredale argues that these public rationales for occupational regulation fail to acknowledge the greatest pressure for controlled access - namely, the desire of occupational groups to protect their earnings, working conditions, and frequently their exclusiveness (989:92; see also Castles et al., 1989:200). For Iredale, the proliferation of licensing and registration arrangements during the 1970s and 1980s is "embedded in a morass

of federal and state legislation suffused with tradition and self-interest" (1987:190).

Such a high level of regulation controlling entry to occupations militates against the overseas trained (NSW Fry Report, 1989:21). Entry into many occupations occurs through a wide range of registration, licensing and certification procedures, administered by federal and state governments, trade and professional bodies, unions and employers. Arrangements for accrediting overseas qualifications have therefore involved a large number of governmental, licensing, professional and industry bodies, often acting at cross-purposes and with little federal/state coordination.[5] The problem of insufficient federal-state cooperation, and the dire outcomes for overseas migrants caused by the absence of national standards for occupational regulation are acknowledged in a recent policy paper, "Migrant Skills: Improving Recognition Processes" circulated by J.S. Dawkins, the Minister for Employment, Education and Training:

* There is insufficient co-operation between the Commonwealth and States in formulating policy and in developing and implementing programs;

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[5]As Mitchell, Tait and Castles (1989:69) and Iredale (1988:21) point out, the rigidity of the recognition barriers depends both on the field and the type of job. At one extreme are a small number of unions or professional associations which have virtually no formal barriers to entry: for example, the Geological Society of Australia operates as a 'learned society'. Some trades (hairdressing and motor mechanics in Victoria) and professions (engineering and speech therapy in New South Wales) are regulated by certification, rather than licensing or registration, which means that non-certified individuals are not prohibited from practising (Iredale, 1987:8-9; Castles et al., 1989:23). At the other extreme, some fields, such as dentistry, medicine and law, are professional "closed shops", and the professional associations have considerable control over future entrants, whether through local training or immigration.

* skills recognition, because it is largely the province of States and Territories, has led to localised occupational entry requirements and recognition process. Such fragmentation has adversely affected the mobility of the Australian-trained, and for skilled migrants has caused confusion, frustration and despair (Dawkins, 1989:2).

Castles et al. comment that "it is hard to explain why certain trades are licensed in some states and not in others - indeed the explanation is usually an historical one, with no clear current rationale....[For example], historically in Victoria, a strong trades tradition and a highly-developed labour movement have led to a high degree of occupational regulation, with considerable involvement by employer and worker organisations in training and accreditation procedures" (1989:88).

A related problem in the recognition processes pertains to the length of time required by migrants in obtaining recognition and finding employment. "Migrant Skills" states that "existing processes are subject to long delays and backlogs, especially in some trades and para-professional areas but increasingly in those professional streams where a series of very rigorous examinations are required" (Dawkins, 1989:3). Castles et al. (1989:39) report that the processing of applications by the Tradesmen's Rights Regulation body took an average of four to five months, with some applications taking up to a year.

The attainment of employment in a migrant's pre-migration field involves at least three processes: assessment of qualifications, recognition of qualifications and finally, obtaining a job. Currently, there is no assurance that success in the completion of one process will lead to success in the other. With reference to the trades covered under the Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act (TRRA), Castles et al. maintain that certification "under the TRRA is not always

in itself sufficient to permit an overseas-trained tradesperson to work in Australia" (1989:17). Frequently tradespeople (particularly in the electrical trades) also need to obtain a licence from the state authorities, and this may entail additional assessment and duplication of trade tests.

Long delays in obtaining recognition of qualifications and entry into pre-migration occupations, and large costs incurred in terms of lost salaries and social security payments, are also common for migrants with professional skills. With reference to the professions, Mitchell, Castles and Tait state that:

> ... membership of the appropriate professional association is a precondition for gaining employment, but obtaining an assessment of equivalence of qualifications by COPQ or NOOSR does not necessarily guarantee equal opportunity, for many employers are reluctant to employ people without 'Australian experience'. There are thus several barriers and gatekeepers to be passed by an overseas trained professional. The result is that many qualified immigrants experience long periods of unemployment and underemployment (1989:15-16).

One problem with current assessment procedures highlighted in government and academic studies is the emphasis placed on equivalence of formal or "paper qualifications" rather than a broader notion of "competence" which takes into account an individual's knowledge, skills and experience. This issue is acknowledged in the policy paper on "Migrant Skills" circulated by the Employment Minister, J.S. Dawkins:

> occupational recognition processes are centred too heavily on "paper" qualifications alone. A person's demonstrated skills and occupational competence are often only incidental or disregarded, or their success

jeopardised by the lack of local knowledge or their qualifications (1989:2).

The emphasis on equivalence of formal qualifications has been seen as a major reason for the lower success rates for applicants from non-English speaking countries in comparison with migrants from English-speaking countries. The existence of "reciprocity arrangements" and the fact that different assessment procedures are used for the two broad groups (migrants from ES and NES countries) is seen as discriminatory against immigrants not trained in a system developed from the British model and who must therefore submit to additional, and frequently inadequate testing procedures (CAAIP, 1988; Castles et al., 1989; Iredale, 1987). Iredale's (1987) research led her to conclude that, "subjective 'paper' analyses and reciprocity arrangements, [which] are a common feature of assessment procedures,...are frequently based on historical tradition, xenophobia and existing knowledge, sometimes sketchy, of training programs" (1987:193).

Education and training in British-style programs, and acquisition of Australian experience become the grounds for recognition, rather than occupational competence which includes consideration of experience. As discussed below, one of the most important reforms in arrangements for recognition of overseas professional and trade qualifications is a shift from assessment of paper qualifications to methods of skills assessment which emphasize competence and experience.

One final issue in assessment and recognition procedures deserving of special attention concerns the evaluation of English language skills. The assessment of English language proficiency varies from one occupation to another. Currently, English language ability is evaluated in one of three alternative ways: directly, by means of English tests (health-related occupations),

indirectly, as part of an oral test of content (electrical trades), or indirectly, in a written content examination (engineering). COPQ had provided an Occupational English test which was used by the health-related occupations: dentistry, dietetics, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and veterinary science. NOOSR continues to administer this test (Mitchell, Tait and Castles, 1989:13). Until 1983, the medical profession had administered its own English language test which was attached to the medical theory paper, administered by the Australian Medical Examining Council (AMEC). As of early 1983, candidates were permitted unlimited attempts at the English test, now designed by the COPQ Expert Panel in Occupational English (also formed in 1983), prior to sitting the AMEC exam (Iredale, 1987:128-131).

Engineering has no formal language requirement for accreditation. However, an examination which is used to test applicants whose overseas qualifications are not accepted is itself a test of the individual's English written language ability. Iredale argues that "such a test is discriminatory towards non-English speaking applicants and [that] this was evidenced in the low attendance and pass rates" (1987:106).

In nursing, an autonomous assessing body, the Australian Nursing Assessment Council (ANAC), responsible to the registration authorities, administers an English test four times a year. Many candidates have complained that ANAC's English test contains questions that are "tricky" (Iredale, 1987:148, 159).

In the plumbing trade, which is stratified into a two-tier system consisting of journeyman and independent statuses, "most licensing authorities require sufficient English language proficiency so that a tradesperson can communicate effectively with inspectors and clients and understand instructions and regulations. In practice, this means that interpreters are allowed in exams

up to journeyman level; however, they are only permitted to translate questions and instructions, while the candidate must reply in writing and in English. Interpreters are not allowed at all at exams at the independent level" (Castles et al., 1989:51).

Within electrical mechanics, a high standard of English language proficiency is justified on the grounds of public safety. More specifically, "electrical tradespersons must be able to work safely on their own and understand the [Australian] wiring code" (Castles et al., 1989:53). No separate English language test is administered; rather, examinations are conducted in English only, and no interpreters are permitted (Ibid, 56). Castles et al. found that regulations for electrical mechanics, and to a lesser extent plumbers, "were in complex, legalistic English, so that the test was in fact an unacknowledged and severe English exam" (1989:206).

Within hairdressing, one of the few female-dominated trades, English language proficiency is not demanded as a requirement of accreditation/licensing, and interpreters are permitted for trade tests, which are mainly of a practical nature. However, some of the tasks required during these tests (such as the filling out of report or analysis sheets) "may in fact disadvantage people with poor English proficiency" (Castles et al., 1989:45).

All of the procedures for testing English as part of the recognition process of overseas qualifications in various professional and trade occupations have been subjected to criticism and are frequently experienced by migrants from non-English speaking countries to be a tool of discrimination. John Rowlings, Director of NOOSR, suggested that the level of English required by the registerable health occupations is unrealistically high. As a brief submitted to the Commonwealth Fry Committee points out, "to say that the English skills

of overseas-born professionals should be indistinguishable from the Australian-born is unrealistic, unnecessary, and would be considered, therefore, discriminatory" (quoted in Iredale, 1987:195). The tests also appear not to have been publicised and to have been cloaked in some secrecy, a fact which has made it difficult for bodies such as TAFE to develop content-relevant vocational English courses. The Commonwealth Fry Committee (1983) was unable to determine either the basis upon which the AMEC and COPQ tests were set or how the appropriate level was arrived at, and was further denied access to the examination papers (Iredale, 1987:195).

In summing up the current practices of occupational evaluation of English language proficiency, Iredale states that "an English requirement is only stipulated in a small number of occupations but many bodies assess for English levels in a covert fashion. This needs to be reduced as most real English learning takes place on-the-job" (1988:52). The issue of vocational English courses, as integrated into or themselves offered as bridging courses, will be addressed below.

(b) Problems of Information Provision

The NSW Committee of Inquiry into Recognition of Overseas Qualifications reported that,

> one of the most serious problems still confronting the overseas-trained is a lack of basic information about the Australian education system, the labour market and the nature of occupational regulation including accreditation procedures ... Immigrants seeking recognition of their overseas qualifications face a daunting task in establishing with certainty where to go, who to see, and what they have to do to gain recognition and hence obtain appropriate employment (NSW Fry Report, 1989:37).

Research investigating the experiences of migrants repeatedly establish the absence of information or misinformation conveyed by immigration officials to migrants regarding the procedures that they must follow in order to gain recognition of their overseas training. Many migrants arrive with little understanding of why they must have their qualifications 'recognised' and with even less knowledge and understanding of how to go about it (NSW Fry Report, 1989:37). Castles et al. (1989:155) found that immigration officers at overseas embassies were not aware of the skills required in registerable trades in Australia and consequently were giving misleading information to potential migrants. The NSW Fry Report argues that "the migration system, i.e., the procedures by which applicants are selected, militates against immigrants being adequately informed" (1989:37). This problem seems to be particularly acute for the largely female migrants who come through the family reunification admissions category and therefore receive virtually no counselling from immigration officers on employment matters (Castles, et al., 1989:97).

The Commonwealth Fry Report argues that immigrants need more than information on systems and requirements. They need to know how to navigate these systems. "In other words, individuals need to be counselled on how to relate their own situation to the system and, therefore, what are the options if the qualification was not recognised. Fry identified the necessity for adequate personal and vocational/employment counselling prior to migration and after arrival in Australia" (Iredale, 1988:33).

(c) Problems of Inadequate Bridging Courses

Dawkins' policy paper, "Migrant Skills" states that "not enough access has been provided to appropriate orientation, bridging, refresher and upgrading courses which may be necessary to obtain recognition" (1989:2). As summarized

by a recent study on overseas-trained professionals, "In view of the difficulties experienced by many overseas trained professionals in entering employment, and the stress laid by employers on the need for 'Australian experience', it appears that the availability of bridging courses and retraining opportunities is far from adequate" (Mitchell, Tait and Castles, 1989:107).

Many agencies are involved in the provision of bridging courses for the overseas-trained. The bulk of funding for courses for the overseas-trained is provided by the Commonwealth Government through two agencies:
(1) Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) under its JOBTRAIN program, and its advanced English Language Program or English for Specific Purposes program, disbursed via the TAFE system; and
(2) Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs (DILGEA) through its Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP) (NSW Fry Report, 1989:44; Iredale, 1988:39).

In 1989-90, out of a total budget of $64 million for JOBTRAIN, run by the Department of Employment, Education and Training, $2.8 million was earmarked by NOOSR to provide access to bridging training for migrant professionals.[6] In 1989-90, 180 JOBTRAIN places were allocated to overseas-trained professionals to help them meet registration requirements in such fields as medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary science and architecture. However, the Director of NOOSR stated in November 1989 that they actually had 400 places in bridging programs (or more than twice the 180 places originally anticipated) and soon

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[6]JOBTRAIN Bridging provides opportunities for the long-term unemployed or disadvantaged job seekers (including migrants from a non-English speaking background) to receive vocational training based on opportunities in the local labour market, particularly where skill shortages exist (Dawkins, 1989:23).

anticipated 800 places for migrants. According to "Migrant Skills", "As migrant professionals gain greater access to mainstream education and training programs, it is expected that JOBTRAIN bridging courses will be offered increasingly to migrants in para-professional, trade and semi-skilled occupations" (Dawkins, 1989:23).

Types of Bridging Courses

There are three broad types of bridging programs offered for overseas-trained professionals:[7]

(i) Bridging programs geared to preparing professionals for exams. Occupations which are registerable and licensable tend to have bridging courses geared to preparing candidates for examinations. An example of this is a bridging program for overseas medical doctors taking the AMEC exam; there are also such programs available for dentists and physiotherapists. Ideally, such courses involve teaching migrant professionals skills to enable them to cope with culturally-specific forms of testing. For example, it means teaching skills in taking multiple-choice exams for migrants from non-English speaking countries where such forms of testing are uncommon. It also means preparing them for the British-style clinical testing employed in Australian medical exams where examinees are customarily 'grilled'.

(ii) Bridging programs that are accredited by professions. In some professions (e.g., radiography), accreditation is obtained by taking and successfully passing exams in a bridging course.

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[7]This three-fold classification of bridging courses was provided by John Rowlings, Director of NOOSR (Author interview, November 9, 1989).

(iii) Bridging programs which are mainstreamed in the educational system. This type of bridging program provides access to the last year of a graduate program and thus permits overseas professionals to obtain Australian qualifications or degrees. This type of bridging course also has the advantage of allowing immigrants to obtain financial support available to students. There are an insufficient number of service places for the overseas trained in academic institutions and teaching hospitals. Iredale states that "there has been minimal involvement by the higher education sector in the provision of courses for those with overseas qualifications. Restrictive Commonwealth funding formulas for Universities and CAEs have militated against the establishment of short bridging or longer-term retraining programs" (1988:39).

Numerous obstacles exist to the introduction of bridging courses or training places for overseas professionals and tradespersons. For instance, by the mid-1980s nursing in New South Wales was characterized by low wages, poor working conditions and lack of status. The NSW Nurses' Association demanded that already overworked nurses not be required to supervise overseas-trained nurses wishing to gain registration (Iredale, 1987:153).

Within trades such as electrical mechanics, two major barriers exist to obtaining on-the-job refresher courses or experience. The first is the reluctance of employers to hire unlicensed tradespeople because of the level of supervision that is required. As Castles et al. point out, this means that overseas-trained electrical mechanics are finding it practically impossible to gain the local circuit wiring experience that is required before a license can be issued (1989:75).

A second obstacle for overseas tradespersons requiring refresher or bridging courses is the system of apprenticeship training which is derived from

the British model, and whose operation is governed by a combination of Commonwealth and State legislation (Iredale, 1987:171). The option of using an apprenticeship as a means of gaining knowledge of local Australian conditions is virtually non-existent for overseas-trained tradespersons as the chances of obtaining an apprenticeship as an adult are very slight (Castles et al., 1989:174). The current push by the Commonwealth government toward award restructuring promises a system of skills formation reliant "not only on initial training, but equally on opportunities for retraining, and upgrading existing skills" (Ralph Willis, Former Minister of Industrial Affairs, 1988:10). Theoretically, the restructured awards should dismantle obstacles to retraining existing in current apprenticeship arrangements and benefit overseas trained tradespeople through "developing articulated training and effective accreditation systems, to ensure that transferable skills are broadly recognized" (Peter Morris, Minister for Industrial Relations, 1989:8).

Although the number and quality of English language courses for skilled migrants are generally recognized to be inadequate and uneven across States/Territories and occupations, it is also evident that significant effort and resources have been channelled into the establishment of specific English programs catering to the overseas trained. In 1983, Commonwealth funding was channelled away from the AMEP into TAFE to provide English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses. Consequently, "there was an explosion of bridging courses in TAFE, most of which attempted to integrate English language training with the specific vocational training requirements confronting people with overseas training" (Iredale, 1989:40). In 1988, the New South Wales TAFE ran twenty-four courses for the overseas-trained from ESP funds and an additional two courses

from College funds, covering a wide range of professions and trades.[8] The objectives of these courses combined updating of subject skills, improvement of job-seeking skills, acquisition of knowledge of industry-vocational practice in Australia, acquisition of relevant work experience, and improvement of English language skills relevant to either accreditation testing or employment (NSW Fry Report, 1989:45).

The gap in the English language program of courses aimed at developing "job ready" linguistic skills was discussed in Part One. The Department of Employment, Education and Training is making an effort to offer appropriate programs for the teaching of "occupational English" by "developing a streamlined and client-oriented English-language program" (Dawkins, 1989:24).

Another recent initiative is the inclusion of a standard English-language training module within the first part of JOBTRAIN bridging programs. The objective of this module will be to provide course participants with the appropriate level of vocational English required to successfully complete the program. Finally, the need to develop better Commonwealth co-ordination of vocational English language courses is an issue that has been referred to the Working Party on Post-Secondary English Language Training chaired by DILGEA (Ibid).

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[8]The following occupational qualifications were included: bakers, carpenters and joiners, professional civil engineers, dental technicians, electricians, fitters and machinists, hairdressers, professional mechanical engineers, technician mechanical engineers, medical professionals (dentists, doctors), motor mechanics, nurses, secretaries, sheetmetal plumbers and sprinkler fitters, teachers and welders (NSW Fry Report, 1989:45).

Commonwealth Recognition Practices and Bodies

As discussed above, official recognition exists of the problems experienced by overseas-trained tradespersons and professionals. The establishment of reforms to deal with these problems are stated Commonwealth priorities. At the time of writing (February 1990), the Commonwealth Government was in the process of reforming pre-existing machinery (e.g., the Tradesmen's Rights Regulation section) and establishing new infrastructure for the reform of professional, para-professional,[9] and trades skills recognition. This included the establishment of the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) which subsumed the skills and qualifications assessment role of the former Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications (COPQ)[10], the National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition (NACSR), and the National Training Board (NTB).

In the remainder of Part Two, I will examine these recent administrative reforms of professional and trades skills recognition, respectively. I will begin accordingly with a brief review of COPQ and then proceed to discuss the major features and priorities of NOOSR and NACSR - the two structures set up to deal with overseas professional qualifications. I will then discuss the reforms pertaining to overseas trades qualifications - relating to the Tradesmen's Rights

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[9]Paraprofessionals are defined as people in occupations having a level of skill commensurate with a 2-3 year certificate or associate diploma. Para-professionals perform complex technical duties requiring the understanding of a body of theoretical knowledge and significant practical skills (Dawkins, 1989:37).

[10]COPQ was mandated to conduct a Review of the Network of Expert Panels and Councils. COPQ did not, however, conduct this review, a task which has since been assigned to a joint Commonwealth-State Working Party. According to John Rowling, the Secretaries of Labour were to meet in December 1989 and report on the review in March 1990.

Regulation Act, the Review of Commonwealth Licensing Practices, and the establishment of the National Training Board.

Reforms in Professional Skills Recognition

Council for Overseas Professional Qualifications (COPQ)

In 1969, the Commonwealth Government established the Committee on Overseas Professional Qualifications (COPQ) within the Department of Immigration. The main aim in establishing COPQ was to provide centralised guidance to governments, industry and prospective immigrants on the selection of overseas-trained professionals. Over time, however, COPQ's role expanded to incorporate the assessment, by comparison of documents ('paper analysis') and by examinations devised by Expert Panels and Advisory Councils, of large numbers of professionals, both those overseas and those already resident in Australia (Iredale, 1989:93).

By 1988, COPQ was working with the professions through twelve expert panels, four autonomous examining councils, one advisory panel and a system of referrals. COPQ had assumed responsibility for conducting examinations in: dentistry, dietetics, nursing, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and veterinary science. (Medicine had fallen under COPQ's auspice until the formation of the Australian Medical Council in 1986).

COPQ, through its Expert Panels, also conducted assessments of comparability of qualifications by means of 'paper analysis' or analysis of documents in: accountancy, architecture, computing, radiography, social welfare, teaching and technical occupations. Assessment for nurses was carried out by the Australian Nursing Assessment Council (ANAC), and for engineers by The Institution of Engineers, Australia (IEAust), with advice from a joint COPQ/IEAust. Advisory Panel. Much of the comparison work has been carried out

by office personnel in the Assessments Division of COPQ, with Expert Panels deciding only the difficult or precedent cases (Iredale, 1988:18).

It is difficult to establish what pattern of equivalencies have emerged by country and occupation in the work of the expert panels given that "there is no uniformity in the policy and practices of Expert Panels" (Iredale, 1988:18). For example,

> The Expert Panel in Teaching regards candidates 'like race horses': taking into account the nature of their formal qualifications which must be equivalent to some Australian general standard and paying some attention to experience. But State Education Departments do not refer cases for assessment by COPQ: many make their own independent, and often different assessments.
>
> The Expert Panel in Computing only assesses applicants who are outside of Australia and asks for a resume of education, training and work experience to be submitted. The Panel gives very little guidance as to the nature and comprehensiveness of this resume as it does not want to 'tell applicants what to write' (Iredale, 1988:18).

Since 1972, there has also been an Expert Panel in general Academic Qualifications, originally established to provide advice on qualifications in the arts, humanities and the pure and social sciences. Over the years, the Panel has extended its field of operations to include within its purview professional, general tertiary and postsecondary qualifications. While the Panel emphasizes its purely advisory status, many universities and Colleges of Advanced Education (CAEs) have come to rely on the Panel's advice in deciding entry to University/ College courses by overseas-qualified people (Iredale, 1988:18).

One of the tasks of the Panel in General Academic Qualifications has been to prepare three editions of a Compendium of guidelines for the assessment of overseas qualifications (with the third complete edition dated May 1986). The Compendium compares the overall generalist degrees of each country to Australian tertiary-level degrees.[11] The academic qualifications of English-speaking countries with tertiary-level systems similar to Australia's (such as Canada) are assessed as having similar equivalency to Australian academic qualifications. Not surprisingly, in COPQ's 1987-88 assessments, "success rates for people from mainly English speaking countries (83 per cent on average) were higher than for people from non-English speaking countries (56 per cent on average)" (COPQ, 1989:34).

In 1982, the Commonwealth Fry Committee recommended the upgrading of the Committee and an increase in its power. Accordingly, it was replaced in 1984 by the Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications. However, Fry's recommendation that COPQ be provided with statutory powers was not implemented. This means that the Council was provided with the power only to assess qualifications, not to recognise them, a fact that has led to considerable confusion and frustration among migrant professionals (Mitchell, Tait and Castles, 1989:13).

COPQ came under considerable criticism, especially from its clientele. Immigrants and ethnic communities viewed the body as remote, inaccessible and

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[11] "While the Panel's guidelines may be applied to assess specifically professional qualifications - such as, for example, a degree in pharmacy or law - the Panel's assessment will relate that qualification not to an Australian degree in pharmacy or law but to the general academic level of a three-year, or possibly four-year, Australian Bachelor's degree or other general qualification" (Compendium, May 1986:5).

insensitive to the real situation facing people with overseas qualifications. The fact that the assessments of qualifications were accomplished only through written correspondence, without interviews of immigrants, added to the impression of the assessing body as bureaucratic and isolated (Author interview with Robyn Iredale, October 17, 1989). The tests devised, in particular for medicine, dentistry and veterinary science, were described by examinees and some practitioners as unjust. Iredale argues that the entry of COPQ into testing was problematic given that:

> First, COPQ and its Expert Panels are not a qualified testing agency and do not have the psychometric experts required to devise properly validated, reliable tests. In the past, many of the examinations have never been validated...Second, the examinations are not usually developed from an analysis of the knowledge and skill requirements of the job of the practising professional but rather from the final academic and practical examinations of students...Third, candidates are frequently given limited information and opportunity for training and practice before the examination (1988:16).

As discussed above, the emphasis given to formal qualifications rather than skills, competence and experience, was regarded as a major flaw in COPQ's assessment procedures. Many immigrants felt "that the emphasis on the formal assessment of qualifications ... limited COPQ's ability to respond to their overall problems. The need to learn English and the opportunities for reorientation/bridging courses [was] largely outside the realm of COPQ's functions" (Iredale, 1988:25).

Several assessments of COPQ have linked its inefficacy to its lack of legislative basis, inadequate resources, and location within the Immigration

Department, rather than in a department dealing with labour market (training, bridging, etc.) programs. These features hampered COPQ from playing an effective role in facilitating the entry of skilled immigrants into the labour market (Iredale, 1988:50-51; Mitchell, Tait and Castles, 1989:13-15). COPQ was not well regarded within the federal civil service; a few people interviewed during the course of this study characterized it as a "graveyard for public servants within the Immigration Department".

Another factor limiting the independence and effectiveness of COPQ pertained to its relationship with professional bodies, licensing authorities and registration boards. While COPQ has played an informational and liaison role, its assessments can and frequently have been disregarded by these bodies (Iredale, 1987:105, 195). Moreover, the distrust of COPQ among ethnic communities was deepened by the fact that COPQ had increasingly become a captive of the various lobby groups that sought to protect the jobs and conditions of their members (Iredale, 1988:50). COPQ came to be regarded as yet another restrictive mechanism, rather than as a resource assisting in the attainment of employment for skilled migrants commensurate with their skills. In its Four Year Plan for 1987-91 (COPQ 1988), the Council recommended an expansion of its role, and a clearer and stronger legislative basis for its work.

The National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR)

The National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) was established on 26 July 1989. NOOSR has subsumed the responsibilities of COPQ for assessing overseas professional, para-professional, technical and some trade qualifications. Trade qualifications covered by the Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act remain the responsibility of the Commonwealth Department of Industrial Relations or the appropriate State departments of employment.

"Migrant Skills" indicates, however, that NOOSR has the "major responsibility for pursuing and facilitating the Government's overseas skills recognition strategy (Dawkins, 1989:12, emphasis added). Coordination of NOOSR's activities with the TRRA network is to be aided through the attendance of the Director of NOOSR as observer at Central Trades Committee meetings. It is hoped that "this and other channels will be used to promote a full exchange of ideas between NOOSR and TRRA" (Dawkins, 1989:34).

While COPQ had been located in the Department of Immigration (DILGEA), NOOSR is a fully integrated organization within the International Division of the Employment, Education and Training portfolio. This shift in departmental responsibility for assessment of overseas qualifications is indicative of the Commonwealth Government's effort to redefine the matter as a labour market issue concerning the whole community, rather than an immigration issue affecting individuals (Mitchell, Tait and Castles, 1989:14-15).

NOOSR is headed by a Director and a Chief Adviser, both members of the Senior Executive Service of the Australian Public Service. Under them are six sections, responsible respectively for: policy development and co-ordination, competency and comparative research, competency assessments, comparative assessments, support, and community relations (Dawkins, 1989:33). The personnel resources provided to NOOSR are equivalent to 60 person years for 1990-91. This amounts to approximately 45 public servants and 20 non-public servants (e.g.: people on contract from professions such as dentistry, nursing and engineering hired to help assess standards in their respective professions).

The most important difference in the orientation of NOOSR in comparison with its predecessor COPQ is the shift in emphasis from assessment of paper qualifications to methods of skills assessment which emphasize competence and

experience. This involves the development of national occupational skills standards based not on formal qualifications but on the skills, knowledge and experience required to perform in professions and para-professions.[12] NOOSR plays a coordinating role bringing together the professions and appropriate state licensing bodies to develop such national, competency-based standards. It also plans to commission research into competency-based standards for professions and para-professions. NOOSR is currently supervising a couple of exercises within professions such as nursing to work out competency-based standards.

According to the Director of NOOSR, the process of developing national competency-based standards to assess people with overseas skills is being driven by two domestic processes: first, the award restructuring in the federal arena which necessitates defining skills standards, and second, the moves currently underway to increase the portability of qualifications and the mobility of labour throughout Australia. While the reforms in assessment of non-award professions are not directly related to award restructuring, the latter can be viewed as a catalyst to these reforms.

In moving toward competency-based skills standards, however, NOOSR is not entirely eliminating the practice established by COPQ of recognition of equivalencies through the Compendium. According to John Rowling, NOOSR cannot afford to eliminate assessments based on formal qualifications given that currently 60% of the 18,000 migrants NOOSR deals with are processed through recognition of equivalencies. Also NOOSR hopes to benefit from the efforts of

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[12]National skill standards "identify the core skills needed for the performance of fundamental tasks required in the everyday practice of a given occupation, and the level of competence necessary to adequately discharge those tasks. These would be applied regardless of where the individual has gained his or her training" (Dawkins, 1989:13).

many countries including Canada, the United States and Britain who contribute to international knowledge of degree equivalencies among countries. For instance, NOOSR hopes to make use of the American Association of Colleges' data base on different countries' educational systems.

The belief that assessments of overseas qualifications by NOOSR can continue to make use of formal educational equivalencies appears to clash with the Commonwealth's Government's and NOOSR's proclaimed move toward competency-based standards. It is also likely that the retention of a system of equivalencies for migrants from countries with British-style educational systems will continue the historical pattern of discrimination against migrants trained in countries with non-British educational and training systems.

The retained use of equivalence guidelines for academic and technical qualifications has, however, also been justified on the grounds that it is necessary to assist in extending improved credit transfer arrangements to migrants so they need repeat as few courses as possible when entering the Australian post-secondary education system (Dawkins, 1989:21-22).

Finally, it must be acknowledged that the valuation of skills approach to assessing migrants' overseas qualifications may be more appropriate for trade and technical level occupations than for many professional occupations. Methods of evaluation of professional qualifications must be appropriately defined to deal with the combination of skills and knowledge acquired by practitioners with many years of post-secondary education.

A second objective of NOOSR is to build up access to bridging and upgrading courses for migrants. According to John Rowling, the increased attention NOOSR is giving to bridging and refresher courses signals one important difference between COPQ and NOOSR: while COPQ was involved in the assessment of

qualifications, NOOSR is more concerned with getting skilled migrants into the labour market.

The underlying aim of NOOSR is to maximise the use of skills of overseas migrants. Therefore, in moving toward a system of competency-based standards, it would theoretically be possible for migrants to undergo downward mobility within a given professional field. For instance, doctors who cannot gain registration could retrain for nursing or pharmacy; nurses could become nurses' aides. The Working Party of the National Population Council recommended that "industrial requirements that prohibit the entry of people...be reviewed to enable people to move more easily into related occupations" (1988:19). Professions such as nursing and pharmacy have met such proposals with a great deal of opposition. They resist any moves into their occupations by people who are not specifically qualified in these professions. According to John Rowling, the professions are generally skeptical about NOOSR, which like its predecessor, COPQ, is viewed as undermining their standards.

In sum, NOOSR differs from COPQ in its institutional location within the federal bureaucracy (DEET as opposed to DILGEA), in its broader mandate (lead role in the Commonwealth Government's overseas skills recognition strategies), and in its apparent, though partial, shift in methods of assessment of overseas qualifications from reliance on formal equivalencies (or paper qualifications) to competency or skills-based assessment. NOOSR is also attempting to increase its efficacy by strengthening its relationship vis a vis the professions to promote greater cooperation. For instance, in order to subvert its status as a "captive" agency of powerful professional associations such as the Australian Medical Council, NOOSR has appointed the Chairperson and one other person to

AMC's examining board. In this way, NOOSR is forcing the AMC to deal with NOOSR and the vexed issue of recognition of overseas-trained doctors.

While the establishment of NOOSR addresses many of the problems and deficiencies revealed in community response and research over recent years, the federal government has not provided the new body with a statutory basis, a factor which some critics have viewed as a failure to provide a real power base.[13] Moreover, the reluctance of the Department of Industrial Relations to relinquish control over the trades has meant that there is still no single Commonwealth body which is responsible for coordination of skills recognition in all occupations--professions, para-professions and trades.

National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition

As part of its reform of arrangements for the recognition of overseas skills, the Commonwealth Government established a National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition (NACSR) in November 1989. The major role of the Committee is to provide advice to the Minister for Employment, Education and Training and the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition on existing and emerging issues in the assessment, recognition and utilisation of overseas skills. NACSR is further expected to act as "an advocate of reform, [drawing] public notice to any inequitable, inefficient or protectionist occupational entry or regulatory arrangements" (Bowen, 1989:11).

The Committee is mandated to report annually to the Minister for Employment, Education and Training on progress being made in implementing aspects

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[13]In 1982, the Commonwealth Fry Committee recommended that COPQ "become a permanent part of Commonwealth Government machinery established under appropriate legislation..." (1983:7). The Government ignored this recommendation in the upgrading of the Committee to a Council in 1983 and in the further upgrading of COPQ in the establishment of NOOSR.

of the Government's overseas recognition strategy. It is currently expected to report to the Minister in March 1990. Secretariat support for the Committee is provided by NOOSR, but NACSR is fully independent from NOOSR in its role as a policy advisory body.

The National Advisory Committee is chaired by Sir William Keys, a former president of the Returned Soldiers League. Its membership includes academics, trade union and business leaders, and professionals, including people who have themselves experienced difficulty getting their overseas qualifications recognized in Australia. There are also currently representatives of two States - from New South Wales and Western Australia; it was anticipated that a third state representative - from Victoria - would also shortly be sending a representative (see Appendix 2, "Membership of NACSR"). A member of the Working Party of the National Population Council which had recommended new institutional arrangements for overseas skills recognition expressed reservations concerning the ability of the Committee to play a strong advocacy role. In this persons's view, the government had avoided appointing critical people to the committee. In addition, such an advisory body was only seen to be effective if it had the cooperation of all the states; yet at the time of writing, only two states had representatives on the Council, with a third state representative anticipated to join in the near future.

Reforms in Trades Skill Recognition

The Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act

The Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act (TRRA) was originally enacted in 1946 to protect the employment rights of apprentice-trained tradespersons in the metal, electrical and boot trades. Provisions of the TRR Act also allowed for the recognition of tradespeople trained in the armed forces and for those

civilians who worked as tradespeople during the war but who had no formal training. In the early years of its administration, the Act was used in a restrictive way, so that only 30 per cent of European-trained electrical and metal tradespersons were able to gain recognition under the Act (Iredale, 1988:19). The Act was widened in the 1950s to cover recognition of overseas-trained tradespersons in the metal, electrical and footwear trades.

The TRR Act is the only national mechanism for the recognition of trade qualifications obtained overseas and by local residents who have not undertaken an Australian apprenticeship in the metal, electrical and boot trades.[14] Since 1946, it has facilitated the acceptance as skilled tradespersons of over 116,000 migrants, the vast majority of them male. In 1987-88, there were over 4,700 applications by immigrants. Of these, 1,350 immigrant applicants were recognized through the granting of an Australian Recognised Tradesman's Certificate (Central and Local Trades Committees, 1987-88:42, Table 3).

The Act embodies a tripartite agreement between employer groups, unions and Commonwealth Government. It enjoys considerable support from both unions and employers, and the Australian Recognised Tradesman's Certificates are widely accepted. According to the Tregillis Report, the TRR Act "has been the most successful example of continuous government, union, employer co-operation in Australia" (1989:1).

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[14]As the boot trades attract a very small number of applications, the TRRA's role can be seen as most significant in the engineering and metal industries. Following the recommendations of the Review of the Operations of the Trademen's Rights Regulation Act (Tregillis, 1989), the Commonwealth Government decided to dispense with further recognition in the boot trades.

The Act is administered by the Federal Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) through six Central Trades Committees (CTCs)[15] and a network of Local Trades Committees (LTCs). The main tasks of the CTCs are policy-making, coordination of the work of the LTCs; the CTCs also serve as an avenue for appeal. The Local Trades Committees are the "shop front" of the TRRA system; their major role is to assess applications for recognition and to issue Australian Recognised Tradesman's Certificates.

The Secretariat attached to the DIR, which services both the CTCs and LTCs, also coordinates the work of the Technical Adviser Service. Technical Advisers are delegated by the Central Trades Committees to assess the qualifications, training and experience of prospective migrants and determine their eligibility for recognition under the TRRA. In late 1989, the Technical Advisers were concentrated in two centres--London and Canberra. The five London-based Technical Advisers carry out all interviews for the UK and also visit one city in each of 20 European countries. The six Canberra-based Technical Advisers visit designated centres in 23 countries in Asia, the Pacific region, the Americas, as well as "non-criteria" countries such as Israel and South Africa.

The TRRA system evaluates the qualifications, training and experience of overseas tradespeople with reference to an extensive information bank on the formal and informal training and accreditation systems of different countries. This information, which is compiled in detailed reports known as "Criteria," has largely been gathered by tripartite missions to selected overseas countries; such tripartite missions are repeated from time to time in response to changes in

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[15]The six CTCs are for: engineering trades, electrical trades, blacksmithing trades, sheetmetal trades, boilermaking trades and boot trades. As mentioned in footnote 14, the central and local trades committees in the boot trades have recently been abolished.

training and assessment procedures. Criteria exist for 43 countries in Europe, Asia and the Americas, known as "Criteria countries" (see Appendix 2 for "List of Criteria Countries").

To be eligible for an Australian Recognised Tradesman's Certificate, applicants must satisfy the LTCs that they have:
(a) completed in an overseas country, training and employment which is considered by the Committee to be equivalent in standard and range to an Australian apprenticeship; or (b) gained experience to an acceptable standard and range of trade work and subsequently had at least six years employment (seven years in the electrical trades) in the trade, have worked at the trade in the last five years and be capable of doing the work of the classification concerned in Australia (NSW Fry Report, 1989:191).

Selection procedures under the TRRA are simpler and more rapid for Criteria than for non-Criteria countries. Applicants from non-Criteria countries are normally given a more searching interview and may be referred to TAFE for a trade test (NSW Fry Report, 1989:191). In principle, all tradespersons from Criteria countries ought to be assessed before migration. This assessment is done by the Technical Advisor, who relies mainly on documents, but sometimes arranges trade tests. In reality, the overwhelming majority of applicants from both Criteria and non-Criteria countries are assessed after migration. Many such applicants have arrived either through family reunion or as refugees. Others have lived in Australia for years, often working in their trade without recognition (Castles et al., 1989:31). In 1987-88, of 4,702 immigrant applications, only 440 had been selected overseas by the Technical Advisor; 4,262 had not.

The success rate of applications varies considerably by category and country of origin. In 1987-88, almost all applicants selected by the Technical Adviser Service overseas (Selected Immigrants) were granted Certificates, while less than one in four Non-selected Immigrants were granted Certificates (Central and Local Trades Committees, 1987-1988:42, Tables 4 and 5). The chance of success for those coming from Criteria Countries is approximately one applicant out of three, almost twice as high as the success rate for non-Criteria Country applicants (Ibid, 44-46, Tables 9 and 10).

People from English-speaking countries have better chances than people from non-English speaking countries. In 1986-87, 58% of applicants from English-speaking countries were successful, while only 22% of applicants from non-English speaking backgrounds were successful (NSW Fry Report, 1989:191). In addition, Europeans appear, on the whole, to have better chances than non-Europeans (Castles et al., 1989:39).

There are several factors which account for this hierarchy of success. Castles et al. argue that similarity of training systems and the level of economic development are more important than racial bias in acccunting for iniquitous outcomes. They argue that the emphasis on equivalence of "paper qualifications" in the selection process contributes to low levels of success for migrants who are trained in non-British type vocational education systems, or whose training is of an informal nature (1989:39). DIR officials offered another explanation for the small percentage of certificates issued to applicants from certain non-Criteria countries: these countries are "notorious for issuing bogus certificates", a problem that lends credence to the need for the establishment of non-biased competency testing.

Another problem, that provided an impetus for the recent reforms to the operation of the TRRA, was the considerable delays in processing of applications, resulting in large backlogs of prospective migrants. In 1982, the Commonwealth Fry Committee found that delays for processing of applications were up to twelve months (Commonwealth Fry Report, 1983:169). In 1987, the delays had produced a backlog of about 5,200 prospective applicants. As reported by Castles et al., the process has been streamlined, so that the waiting period for skilled tradespersons is shorter than a few years ago:

> At present the waiting period before papers are processed is said to be about 6 weeks - a considerable improvement on the past. Then there may be a further 3 - 6 months wait for an interview. The total waiting period is said to be about 4 - 5 months, but longer for people from areas not visited frequently by Technical Advisers (1989:30).

Several recent reports have attributed the delays in assessment of qualifications to administrative problems and demarcation disputes between the Industrial Relations and the Immigration Portfolios (Castles et al., 1989:30-31, 39; NSW Fry Report, 1989:192; Tregillis, 1989:2). For instance, some delays (up to ten months in rare cases) resulted from the failure of the Department of Immigration to forward applications for assessment to the CTCs and Technical Advisors promptly on receipt of applications to migrate. Other delays stemmed from the practice of automatic referral of documents to overseas posts from applicants from Criteria countries who were not assessed prior to migration, and the considerable amounts of time taken by these overseas posts in answering verification requests.

The recent administrative reforms have helped both to reduce the time taken for applications to an average of 4 to 5 months, and decreased the backlog to

approximately 700 cases from 5,200 two years earlier. The TRRA service is aiming to further shorten the processing time of applications to 3 months per case.

Brian Tregillis, a former National Director of the Commonwealth Employment Service and a former Chairman of the central trades committees, was appointed in November 1988 to conduct a review of the operations of the TRR Act. The recommendations from the Tregillis Report of the Review of the Operations of the Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act (March 1989) were approved by the Federal Government in May 1989 while certain reforms had been implemented in earlier months. The reforms involve both administrative changes - an overhaul of the administrative machinery that supports the operations of the Act, and a restructuring of the central and local trades committee network - and a streamlining of the procedures for assessment of qualifications and processing of applications for trademen's certificates. Examples of recent administrative reforms include the abolition of both the boot trades and policy co-ordination committees. The number of Central and Local Trades Committees have been reduced; in addition to the boot trades committee having been discontinued, the boilermaking, sheetmetal and blacksmithing committees have been consolidated into a new fabrication committee. This means that the TRRA structure is left with three trades committees at the central and local levels: electrical, engineering and fabrication.

Tripartite missions to overseas countries, previously undertaken on an annual basis, are now undertaken on an ad hoc basis as needed.[18] The Director of the Technical Adviser Service stated that he anticipated that the recent

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[18]Tregillis, who saw the tripartite missions as very costly, recommended that there should be no program of annual tripartite missions, and that the review of existing criteria should in most countries be carried out by Technical Advisers.

events in Eastern Europe and the likely increase in Eastern European applications for migration to Australia necessitated a tripartite mission to those countries in the near future.

Tregillis assessed many of the rules and procedures relating to the recognition process as being too rigid and recommended reforms aimed at a more efficient and equitable approach (1989:9). For instance, where in the past, applicants from Criteria countries were interviewed, interviews have now largely been eliminated in cases where the documentary evidence of a person's training and employment experience satisfies the criteria. Interviews are now only held if the trades skills of Criteria-country applicants are based solely on experience. Reforms related to the handling of documentary evidence (for e.g., the practice of local committees referring back to Technical Advisors for authentication of documents of non-selected applications from Criteria countries has been eliminated), have also shortened delays in processing of TRRA applications.

The Department of Industrial Relations' administration of the trade recognition function is also moving in the direction of partial cost-recovery for services provided under the TRR Act. The funds raised are being used to provide additional staff and to upgrade computerised management and processing systems.

Applicants for the Certificate are charged $55 per application and $95 when they take a trade test. The Technical Adviser Service is also selling their services to employers by providing fast-track assessments for overseas skilled tradespersons recruited through the tripartite-negotiated "Employer Nominated" category of admissions. Companies are charged $350 per day, plus the expenses incurred by the Technical Advisors, for this service. Trade unions have accepted

this practice for trades in high demand with certain provisos: they will allow companies to import overseas fully-qualified tradespersons, but in turn companies are compelled to provide training within these trades. In general, the trade unions have accepted the recent reforms to the operations of the Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act. The assent of the trade unions in the trades covered by the TRRA to the Tregillis Report recommendations was obtained at a joint meeting of all the Central Trades Committees.

Some of the expected reforms in Commonwealth licensing practices are, as discussed in the next section, more highly contested by the affected unions.

Review of Commonwealth Licensing Practices

The granting of an Australian Recognised Tradesman's Certificate does not necessarily give an immigrant the right to work in his or her trade. It may also be necessary to gain a license from state authorities. This applies to electrical mechanics in all states (except NSW), to other electrical trades in some states, and to motor mechanics in NSW (Castles et al., 1989:33-34). In addition, certain non-TRRA trades - such as hairdressing and the building trades, require licensing in some states but not in others. The inconsistency in licensing arrangements across states was earlier identified as adversely affecting the entry of skilled migrants into the Australian labour market. Commonwealth and state authorities are increasingly seeing licensing arrangements as a major impediment to award restructuring and labour market mobility.

At the time of writing, a Review of Commonwealth Licensing Practices was being undertaken by the Departments of Labour Advisory Committee (DOLAC), with representation from the Commonwealth government, 6 state and 2 territory governments. The committee has chosen to begin the review by focusing on licensing within the electrical trades. The choice of the electrical trades is

linked to the trend-setting role of the metal industry in award restructuring. Training and career paths within the industry are being developed along three streams - mechanical, fabrication and electrical. Of these three, the electrical stream is presenting most difficulty for the award restructuring process as the electrical trades are regulated by licensing agreements within each state. Licensing as an electrical mechanic requires a four-year apprenticeship. The obvious public safety aspects of the area saw the introduction of licensing for the electrical trades during the early part of the 19th century (Castles et al., 1989:53).

Up to now, legislation has required that even delimited electrical tasks - pertaining to the connecting, disconnecting and testing of equipment - be performed by licensed electricians, a requirement that is viewed as unnecessarily rigid and costly both to industry and to occupations within the restructured metals award.[17] At the time of writing, Brian Tregillis was writing a report on the review of Commonwealth licensing practices for DOLAC which was scheduled for March 1990. (DOLAC in turn is expected to report to the Ministers of Labour Advisory Committee (MOLAC) in May 1990.) The recommendations of the Tregillis' report are anticipated to be in the direction of a restricted licensing system that would permit limited electrical work for workers who have not undergone the full apprenticeship training as electrical mechanics. Tregillis is of the view

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[17]The key occupation in the metals industry affected is that of instrument or mechanical fitters who used to be trained in the mechanical stream, but whose work on controls in the metal industry necessitates knowledge of some electrical tasks. Under the current state licensing arrangements, instrument fitters would have to undergo the full four-year adult apprenticeship in electrical mechanical training. Some employers are unwilling to cover the high cost of this training and some members of this highly skilled trade are facing unemployment, notably in Victoria.

that licensing was introduced at a time when training was far less sophisticated than it is contemporaneously. Currently, the high quality of training makes the public safety function of licensing redundant. Moreover, within certain trades such as hairdressing, licensing serves only to control the number of people within the occupation. This argument is similar to that made by Robyn Iredale (1987; 1988). However, Iredale proposes that licensing should be retained in "life threatening occupations", i.e., those in which strong considerations of public health and safety apply. The electrical trade unions are opposed to the abolition of licensing and argue for the continuation of a full four-year apprenticeship as a prerequisite for a license as an electrical mechanic. They have allowed for one concession departing from the current licensing provisions which prohibit the non-licensed from touching a live wire: mechanical fitters, with appropriate training, could connect and disconnect motors. However, their concern with restricted licensing is where practically to draw the line in the electrical tasks permitted by a person holding such a restricted license?

In their view, the approach to training in the new metals award signals a path to deskilling within the electrical trades. The electrical unions maintain a model of training which involves initial intensive training. This model contradicts the accepted wisdom of award restructuring where initial training is meant to impart a broad basis for acquisition of different pathways of trade skills for a 'life-time of learning.'

For the electrical trade unions, the proposed changes in licensing practices and award restructuring also undermine their memberships and organizations, presupposing as they do industry-wide unions which would replace

the extant occupational unions.[18] Thus, the opposition of the electrical trade unions to elimination or changes in the licensing system reflects their resistance to de-skilling, demarcation disputes with other unions, and their determination to save their own organizations.

Beyond the electrical trades, the Review of Commonwealth Licensing Practices is examining licensing within the building trades for occupations such as plumbers and gas-fitters, and trades which are licensed in some states and not in others (e.g., hairdressing, motor mechanics, welding). The aim of the review is to find out which licensing rules apply within each state and territory, whether such rules continue to be necessary (e.g., for occupational health and safety reasons), and how best to achieve uniformity and reciprocity across states. The objective of the Commonwealth government reforms is to achieve consistency in national standards of both licensing and, as discussed in the following section, training.

The National Training Board

In April 1989, a Special Commonwealth/State Ministerial Conference on Training was convened whose purpose was to shape an agenda on national training standards in trades and to discuss a proposal, originally initiated by the States

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[18]The federal government's stance on the restructuring of unions is contained in the position paper, "Improving Australia's Training System", circulated by the Minister of Employment, Education and Training. "A major rationalisation of union structures, initiated by the union movement itself and facilitated by the Government's new industrial relations legislation, will progressively lead to fewer and larger unions, increasingly with an industry focus and a broadened national base" (Dawkins, 1989:22).

through COSTAC[19] to establish a tripartite national skills standards setting body.[20] As with all the recent reforms addressing the problems of migrants with overseas skills, the National Training Board was a response to domestic economic and industrial relations issues - namely, an effort to develop nationally-consistent training responses to award restructuring, and to ensure portability of skills achieved through training from one State/Territory to another.

The Special Ministerial Conference on Training held on 28 April 1989 authorised a COSTAC Working Party of Commonwealth, State and Territory officials to develop detailed proposals for the establishment of the new National Training Board. The NTB will be established as an incorporated body rather than a statutory authority, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Commonwealth and States/Territories.[21] The signatories to the MOU will be Ministers responsible for vocational education and training. Where there is more than one Minister responsible for this portfolio (as in NSW), the State/Territory will decide upon the signatory. The fact that the NTB is established through a Memorandum of Understanding, rather than as a statutory body reflects the resistance of States and Territories to conceding any of their statutory power. Thus, "the terms of ... agreement ... recognise the constitutional and

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[19]COSTAC is the acronym for the Commonwealth-State Training Advisory Committee which has representatives from the State and Territory Training Authorities, TAFE, ACTU and employer groups. It also has a Secretariat which is chaired by a representative of the federal government.

[20]NOOSR and NACSR were not yet in existence at the time of this conference.

[21]The central aspect of the MOU is that States/Territories agree to participate in the processes of the Board and undertake their training and related functions in a manner consistent with the national skills standards determined by the Board.

legislative power of State/Territory Governments for the regulations and administration of vocational education and training" (Dawkins, April 1989:32).

The Board will be managed by a tripartite Board of Directors. The Board will comprise: an independent, industry-based Chairperson, with close connections with the Metal industry, and appointed on a part-time basis; one representative from each of the federal, state and territory governments; two representatives of employers (appointed by Ministers in consultation with peak employer bodies); and two nominees of the Australian Council of Trade Unions. The Board will be supported by a small Secretariat of up to 10 people based in Canberra, and is expected to commence operation in February 1990.

The National Training Board will be funded on a cost-shared basis by the Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments, on a 50/50 basis. The federal government has picked up many of the establishment costs ($.75 million). The operational costs in 1990-91 are anticipated to be $1.1 million.[22] Other funding arrangements are being considered to move the Board to a degree of self-sufficiency through fee-for-service arrangements.

The role of the Board will be to establish a framework for ensuring consistent national standards and skill competencies across the full range of industry sectors and for all occupations up to and including the para-professional level, covered by industrial awards and agreements. For para-professionals and professionals who are falling into award restructuring, such

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[22]These figures were conveyed by Michael Murphy, the key Commonwealth official involved in the establishment of the National Training Board (Author interview, January 4, 1990). They diverge from the "forward estimates of assistance for the establishment and operation of the proposed National Training Board" in Dawkin's (April 1989:51) position paper. The estimates in this paper are for: 1989-90: $1.5m; 1990-91: $2.6m; 1991-92: $2.7m.

as nurses and possibly teachers, NOOSR will be adopting the national standards developed by the NTB.

The framework of national skills standards are meant to provide benchmarks for: the ongoing operations of credit or Certificate providers such as the State training authorities, and of industry training committees; the provision of training; the accreditation and recognition of training; curriculum development for industry training; the articulation of industry training to the formal education system; and the recognition of migrant skills and overseas qualifications. The NTB will not be a certificate-issuing body in its own right, but will play a role in the endorsement of certificates - issued either by the States or by private training bodies.

Similarly, the primary responsibility for developing skills standards will rest with industry rather than the Board. The national Industry Training Committee Network (established by the federal government in 1976)[23], industry associations and bodies to be established under restructured awards will have a major role to play in this process. State and Territory Training Authorities and their advisory boards will also be closely involved both through their linkages with national bodies and through their representation on the NTB. The role of the NTB will be to nationally recognise and ratify standards proposed by industry after consultation with all key interest groups and consideration of resource implications. It will also be able to provide advice and assistance to industry in developing standards and will be required to identify areas in which national standards may be required.

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[23]This Network is composed of tripartite Industrial Training Councils, funded by both the federal government and industry.

The timetable for the development of national standards is driven and constrained by the process of award restructuring. The National Wage Case of 1989 specifies that in order for the second of two equal wage increases to occur, unions and industries have to have demonstrated to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission that they have successfully implemented strategies in accordance with the Structural Efficiency Principle (SEP). The success of this wage system then is dependent on union commitment to the broad award framework, and to classification change and new job specifications. A consistent definition of skills standards is clearly necessary for the success of the wage system and the implementation of principles of labour market efficiency and structural adjustment on which it is based (National Wage Case Decision, 7 August 1989).

In the short term, the activities of the National Training Board are not likely to affect the processes of recognition of overseas trades and para-professional skills in Australia. In the long term, however, the NTB's role in establishing national competency-based skills standards is an important component to reforms of current arrangements for the recognition of overseas qualifications. The NTB should aid in eliminating some of the stumbling blocks to the ability of migrant tradespersons to obtains jobs in the Australian labour market commensurate with their skills, training and experience. More specifically, the NTB should ameliorate delays and inequities based on current difficulties in assessing the actual skills and competence of migrants, and exacerbated by the inconsistency in standards and duplication of trade tests across States and Territories.

Part Three: Anti-Racism and Human Rights

The influence of economic and industrial restructuring, so clearly manifest in recent reforms in Commonwealth policies on English language training and recognition of overseas qualifications, is also felt in recent approaches to issues of racism undertaken by the Commonwealth government and other institutions such as trade unions. The impact of the economic agenda on state and union strategies to deal with racism is however, less direct and more subtle than on the shaping of the other two policy areas. Part Three examines the links between the new economic agenda and anti-racist and migrant worker issues with respect to three sets of activities: (1) the trade union responses to racism and migrant worker disadvantage; (2) the Special Inquiry into Racist Violence undertaken by the Australian Race Discrimination Commissioner; and (3) the Community Relations campaign coordinated by the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Trade Unions, Migrant Workers and Racism[1]

The research to date on the relationship of Australian trade unions to NES workers has been virtually unanimous in concluding that, "overall, unions have been slow to respond to the special needs of non-Anglophone immigrants" (Lever-Tracy and Quinlan, 1988:148; see Collins, 1988; Nicolau, 1986; Quinlan, 1982; and for a good summary of research, Miltenyi, 1988). In the early years of Australian unionism, union policies were concerned with "the preservation of the

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[1]In this investigation of the role of trade unions in representing migrant worker and anti-racist concerns, interviews were conducted with ethnic liaison officers in the ACTU, Victorian Trades Hall Council, full time officials in the federal and Victorian branches of the Clothing and Allied Trades Union, female, NES members of Women in Industry Contraception and Health (WICH), the Chairperson of the Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission, and a consultant who has worked widely with unions on migrant issues.

whiteness of Australian by immigration restrictions and work bans on Asian settlers" (Nicolau, 1986:58).

As Alan Matheson, the Ethnic Liaison Officer for the ACTU has noted, "An examination of post-war trade union discussions - agenda items, state branch meetings and ACTU Congresses - shows an overriding concern that increased numbers of migrants might depress wage levels, increase pressure on present shortages of essentials such as housing, and create unemployment" (n.d.:79). Indeed, the ACTU did not seriously debate the issue of migrant workers until 1975, or develop a specific policy on immigration and migrant workers until 1977. It was not until 1979 that the ACTU passed its first resolution on migrant workers - more than 30 years after the introduction of a post-war immigration policy that brought in substantial groups of NES migrant workers (Collins, 1988:143).

Two explanations prevail in accounts for the belated (and as will be seen weak) response of the union movement and leadership to the special needs of NES migrant workers. One explanation accepts that racism and discrimination are present within the trade union movement, but that these sentiments simply reflect an equal measure of racism and prejudice against non-Anglo immigrants in the larger community (Quinlan, 1979; Durie, n.d.) Matheson put forward this view when he stated that, "Unions do no more than reflect the dilemmas in Australian society" (Author interview, December 11, 1989).

An alternative explanation focuses on the industrial relations context within which migrants became organized into union structures. Lever-Tracy and Quinlan (1988) argue that the failure of unions to challenge the sometimes discriminatory treatment meted out to migrant workers was based on the institutional protection afforded to many unions and their leaders by the closed shop and their adherence to centralised negotiation practices. These features

of Australian unionism, which were the product of a social and political pact drawn up half a century before mass non-British immigration began, "removed any real incentive to encourage rank and file involvement outside of the odd mass meeting or demonstration stoppage" (1988:144-145; 163). Thus, in a context where union membership was made a condition of employment, many of the difficulties associated with recruiting and maintaining the allegiance of immigrants were avoided (Ibid., 138).

Currently, migrants from non-English speaking countries are concentrated in semi-skilled and unskilled labouring and production line jobs, particularly in manufacturing and construction (Collins, 1988:79). NES migrants are thus found in industries and occupations which are the traditional bastions of unionism. They are, as Lever-Tracy and Quinlan point out,

> also to be found in pockets of low unionisation including isolated manufacturing concerns (such as backyard clothing factories), small businesses (shops, restaurants and so on which relied upon family labour), service industries such as cleaning, and the various types of sub-contractors in the building industry and elsewhere (1988:140).

Overall, however, foreign-born workers, and especially those from Yugoslavia, Greece and Italy, are more highly unionised than their Australian counterparts (see Appendix 3, Table 1). The vast majority of studies have concluded that while NES migrants have been more highly unionized than ES migrants or Australian-born workers, they have not been particularly well-served by their unions. Nicolau's (1986) survey of eight unions in New South Wales found that a high level of ignorance prevailed among union officials concerning the basic facts about their immigrant members. This ignorance on the part of the union hierarchy is reinforced by the reluctance on the part of trade unions

to collect membership data on ethnicity, birthplace, languages spoken, etc. Only two unions, the Miscellaneous Union (West Australian Branch) and the Building Workers Industrial Union, are known to collect data on the ethnicity of their members (Miltenyi, 1988:33). As Miltenyi (1988:35) and others (e.g.: Nicolau, 1986:263) argue, the equitable participation of NESB workers in labour market programs, and adequate union responses to difficulties experienced by immigrant women and men can only be developed and evaluated by collecting statistics on the ethnicity and language(s) of union membership.

One measure of migrant disaffection and poor representation of NES immigrants within Australian unions is the failure of NES immigrants, and NESB women in particular to secure more than a handful of influential posts within union hierarchies. Hearn's (1976) study in Victoria found that in 1971-72, only 31 of 300 union officials were overseas born of whom nine were non-British immigrants. By 1976, the figure had risen to 42 overseas-born officials with 16 being born outside the British Isles.

Similarly, in a more recent survey carried out by Nicolau (1986) in New South Wales in 1983-84, only 22 full-time officials (3.1%) from the total of 711 officials working in 142 unions were born in NES countries. Moreover, only 5 (.07%) of the 711 full-time officials were NES migrant women. The factors most frequently mentioned to account for the relative scarcity of NES foreign-born officials, even in unions where the membership is predominantly foreign-born, are language difficulties, the complexity of Australian industrial relations, discouragement by Australian and British, male-dominated union hierarchies, and ideological antipathy to union politics among some (e.g., anti-Communist) migrant groups (Hearn, 1976; Lever-Tracy and Quinlan, 1988; Miltenyi, 1988; Nicolau, 1986). To this list could be added the factors that are particularly

likely to discourage the involvement of NES migrant women in union meetings and leadership races such as family and childcare responsibilities and lack of child care provisions, the double day of work, inconvenient union meeting times, sexism of male union officials, and gender-specific English language difficulties.

In his 1983-84 study, Nicolau found that the gap between immigrant unionists and the wider union structures was further perpetuated by a lack of participation by immigrants in union courses and training run by their union and/or Trade Union Training Authority (1986:536). A survey carried out in 1985, by Leo Gatica, showed that 86% of the NESB interviewed did not know of TUTA's existence (cited in Miltenyi, 1988:58-59). Nicolau's NSW survey showed that approximately one-third of his respondents felt that they were discriminated against by people in their union in matters of promotion, allocation of work and overtime, compensation and sick pay. Vietnamese-born unionists were most inclined to indicate that they were the victims of union discrimination (1986:446-447).

Since the early 1980s and perhaps even earlier, some changes have taken place within Australian unions - both in the election of a small but growing number of NES immigrants to full-time union posts, and in the development of new policies responding to migrant worker concerns. In some cases, immigrants have won posts by wresting the positions from the incumbent leadership in highly contested races. For instance, "in 1978, an opposition 'ticket', predominantly composed of immigrant women, challenged the leadership of the Clothing Trades Union (Victoria branch), with eight of its candidates being subsequently elected to the union executive despite a vitriolic defence conducted by incumbent officials" (Lever-Tracy and Quinlan, 1988:146). The sponsorship by the incumbent Australian or British-born union leadership of NES immigrants to positions in

the hierarchy in other unions has frequently been motivated by considerations of organisational survival in weakly organised areas, where award evasion has been common (Ibid:145).

Some informants with whom I spoke (both inside and outside unions) felt that a marked improvement has occurred with how trade unions deal with migrant worker issues, although the gains have affected only a small segment of all unions. To support this claim, they point to the growing presence of bilingual, NES migrants in official positions in unions with large migrant memberships in the building and metal trades, food, tramways, clothing, railways, confectionary, and liquor trades.

In addition, several of these unions have adopted practices designed to respond to the special needs of their migrant workforce. Unions such as the Hospital Employees Federation (Victoria), the Australian Railway Unions (NSW), the Building Workers' Industrial Union (NSW), and the Clothing and Allied Trades Union now regularly translate information on major issues (worker's compensation, award restructuring, etc.) into community languages and publish multi-lingual newsletters. In Victoria, the Trade Union Migrant Worker Centre, which had been established by the Metalworkers Union with DILGEA funding, provides translations of several unions' publications. Some unions have been major advocates for English in the Workplace (see Part One of this report). In Victoria, a series of occupational, health and safety (OHS) conferences have been run in community languages, and unions have actively sought representation of migrants on OHS committees. About ten per cent of unions have established Migrant Worker Committees to encourage and enable participation of migrant workers (Miltenyi, 1988:39). Some unions, like the Clothing union, have hired full-time, bilingual

NES organizers, a necessity for organizing a multi-lingual workforce whose English language proficiency is generally at low levels.

Some of the initiatives by individual unions or union branches have been provided support by the ACTU's policies on immigration and migrant settlement in the 1980s, which have stressed the need to campaign for a multilingual workplace, to encourage the greater involvement, and better representation of, migrant workers in the workplace and in unions, and investigate the special problems faced by migrant women. As importantly, funding by the Commonwealth Government provided resources to the ACTU and some of its affiliates to establish programs for migrant workers. In 1983, the federal government introduced the Migrant Workers Rights Scheme (MWRS) to increase migrant workers' understanding of their industrial rights and assist unions to address migrant worker problems.

The Scheme has enabled unions and peak organisations to apply for funds to employ a specialist worker. In 1986/87, a total of 14.5 positions were funded under the Scheme. The grants were distributed to 5 peak organisations, 2 federal unions and 7.5 positions were funded with state registered unions (Miltenyi, 1988:22). The creation of specific positions within unions and peak organizations to deal with migrant worker issues has led to a number of tangible achievements for migrant workers. The initiatives mentioned above - including English in the Workplace programs, multilingual union publications, and occupational health and safety programs in community languages and with NES leadership - have been actively supported by the MWRS.

Notwithstanding these tangible achievements, the impact of the Scheme in persuading unions to take up the needs of immigrant workers as part of their core concerns has been limited by the structural position of the specialist staff, and the reluctance of unions to commit their own resources (Miltenyi, 1988:23).

Nearly all of the staff appointed as Ethnic Liaison Officers have had social sciences/welfare backgrounds, and are tertiary trained, rather than having come up through the union ranks. Like other specialist officers and units, they "clearly sit outside the union's traditional hierarchy and are excluded [and marginalised] from executive deliberations" (Ibid). Such specialist positions also invite other members of the union to abrogate their responsibilities within that "speciality area". The marginalisation and ghettoization of migrant worker issues is further exacerbated by officials' general reluctance to focus on issues affecting one 'sectional interest' in their membership (women, migrants, Aborigines, etc.), which they anticipate will foment the resentment of the excluded sections, not likely to benefit directly from the minority programs. (As discussed in Part One, ES workers have voiced their resentment of EWP classes for NES workmates.)

Several writers, and unions officials interviewed for this study, emphasized that a large gap exists between the stated policies of the peak organizations such as the ACTU and the implementation of these policies by unions. English in the Workplace is, according to the Ethnic Liaison Officer of the Victorial Trades Hall Council, "one of the first things to be traded away during negotiations." While the ACTU, as the national peak organization has 'policies about almost everything,' it cannot force affiliates to implement them. (In this important sense, the ACTU's position vis a vis its affiliates is analogous to that of the Canadian Labour Congress.) Some of the ACTU's state branches, most notably the Labour Council of NSW, have been intransigent in their resistance to introducing migrant policies proclaimed by the ACTU (Lever-Tracy and Quinlan, 1988:147). As summed up by Miltenyi (1988:17), "there is not the strong support from affiliates to empower the peak organisations to embark

upon an extensive campaign of motivating affiliates to take action on policies focusing on migrant and Aboriginal members."

One area in which the labour movement as a whole seemed noticeably quiescent during late 1989 and early 1990 is anti-racism. In the past, a number of peak organisations have initiated campaigns to combat racism, e.g, the Labour Council of NSW, United Trades and Labour Council of S.A., Labour Council of W.A., Combined Unions Against Racism. Moreover, the ACTU had intervened during the "Blainey debate" to place the trade union on record as opposing racism and discrimination in immigration policy (ACTU Media Release, March 28, 1984).

During late 1989-early 1990, trade unions appeared not to play any role with respect to the Commonwealth Government's two race relations initiatives - the Inquiry into Racist Violence or its Community Relations campaign. Union officials stated that although peak councils such as the ACTU and Victoria Trades Hall Council had developed materials on racial harassment, that this issue was not an industrial issue and therefore not a current priority. None of the roughly 200 submissions to the National Inquiry into Racist Violence had been submitted by trade unions; it is notable, however, that submissions were not solicited from trade unions. (Ironically, an ACTU Executive Decision on Racial Harassment (May 1989) defines racial harassment as an industrial and union issue and promises to "prepare a plan of action to combat racial harassment to be presented to Congress.")

The Ethnic Liaison Officer for the ACTU conveyed that the labour federation had decided to refrain from sending representatives to the committee developing the Community Relations Strategy, on the grounds that it was "a waste of money" and was promoting material written by academics that was inaccessible and remote to the industrial concerns of unions (Author interview, December 11, 1989).

In sum, during the late 1980s, trade unions assigned a low priority to multicultural and anti-racist issues. This may be linked to the overwhelming preoccupation of Australian trade unions with efforts to grapple with fundamental changes to the workforce and their memberships linked to processes of industry and award restructuring, and union amalgamation. In addition, both the distant and more recent history of Australian trade unions demonstrates that the commitment to communicating with and serving the industrial interests of their immigrant members has not run deep.

Award Restructuring Implications for Migrants

Despite the overriding optimism conveyed by the Commonwealth Government and the ACTU about the anticipated benefits of award restructuring - higher pay, more interesting jobs, better training and new career paths - there is also a clear recognition that award restructuring will lead to substantial lay-offs of workers. The workers most heavily affected by retrenchment in industries that are being restructured (i.e., metals, clothing, textiles, footwear, vehicle, timber) are the older, NES migrants in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. These are the workers whose low levels of English proficiency offers a substantial impediment to re-training, who are otherwise costly to re-train, and who are least informed about their rights.

For those specialised in migrant issues within the labour movement, tackling the concerns of migrant workers (such as ESL in training programs) is a matter of organizational survival. Union membership has suffered a marked decline over the past ten years and the decrease in membership has been greatest for NES migrants (see Appendix 3, Table 1). This is because of the substantial decline in manufacturing and construction sectors with high concentrations of migrants, and the growth of outwork, subcontracting, and part-time employment.

The proportion of NES workers who belonged to unions had declined from 64% in 1976 to 53% in 1986. The decline in union membership among newly arrived immigrants (who would be heavily represented in the "other" category) is particularly great (10%). This contrasts with a decline from 50% to 45% among the Australian born workforce, and a decline from 48% to 44% among workers born in other English-speaking countries (see Table 1).

While retaining and recruiting new immigrant workers would appear sensibly to be priorities for the crisis-ridden unions, unions have been slow to communicate the impact of industrial restructuring to their migrant members. Miltenyi (1988:49), for instance, makes the point that the key documents produced by the ACTU on industrial restructuring in 1987 - "Australia Reconstructed" and "Future Strategies for the Trade Union Movement" - make no more than passing reference to either migrants or Aborigines. Within these documents, the impact of union amalgamation and other changes on migrant workers is not addressed.

Amalgamation is disproportionately affecting unions with high concentrations of migrants - e.g., Federated Ironworkers' Association and Australian Workers Union; Textiles, Clothing and Footwear; Building Construction and Timber. NES female executive members at the Clothing and Allied Trades Union (Victoria) expressed their anxiety that amalgamation with unions whose executives are entirely male and insensitive to problems faced by immigrant women, would be regressive for CATU's female migrant membership.

Miltenyi argues that the current context of union amalgamation offers an opportunity for unions "to vary their constitutions, rules and structures to incorporate, at all levels (management as well as the shop floor), mechanisms which focus on issues of relevance to migrants and Aborigines" (1988:50). It remains to be seen whether Australian unions undergoing amalgamation will seize

this opportunity to overcome their histories of ethnic and racial exclusivism and develop structures that democratically and meaningfully represent the interests of NESB, migrant and Aboriginal workers.

The ACTU and individual unions such as the Clothing and Allied Trades Union have produced a series of documents on award restructuring and its implications for migrants, including "advice for retrenched workers" on assistance programs. In CATU's case, the documents exist in several languages. Many migrant workers are fearful and skeptical about the effects of award restructuring on their future employment. Such attitudes are not surprising given: (a) the confusion over the complex processes involved in award restructuring that reigns even among union delegates and management, who have been exposed to a good deal more information than the majority of workers; (b) the traditionally poor communication that has characterized the relationship between union leadership and migrant rank and file; and (c) the accurate perception that restructuring will lead to retrenchment for foreign-born workers who are older, and with poor English language skills.

The National Inquiry into Racist Violence[2]

In December 1988, the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission announced a National Inquiry into Racist Violence to be conducted by the Race Discrimination Commissioner, Irene Moss. The Inquiry arose out of repeated concerns expressed by individuals and community groups to the Commission about the prevalence and damaging consequences of racist violence. Moreover,

[2]The following discussion on the Inquiry into Racist Violence relies on interviews with members of the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, press reports and transcripts of the proceedings of public hearings held by the Inquiry in Sydney (August 24, 1989) and Townsville (October 19, 1989).

members of the Commission perceived that the incidence of acts of racist violence had increased, and thus sought to fulfill the Commission's obligation to investigate all forms of racism, including racist violence.

The Inquiry has three goals. The first is to determine the forms by which racist violence is expressed. The second is to determine the extent of racist violence within the Australian community. The third is to determine what options are available for government and government instrumentalities to counter racist violence.

For the purpose of the Inquiry, "racist violence" is defined as "a specific act of violence, intimidation or harassment carried out against an individual, group or organisation on the basis of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin." The Inquiry's definition of racist violence covers such things as verbal insults, threats, spitting, graffiti, tyre slashing, vandalism, intimidating telephone calls, and physical violence carried out upon individuals or groups.

The Commission emphasized from the outset that the Inquiry was not looking into the "broader issues of race relations where violence has formed an historical part of such relations." In specifying the focus of the Inquiry, the Race Discrimination Commissioner stated that the Inquiry would not be looking at the history of Black-White relations in Australia, but would include the "bashing or psychological terrorism inflicted on Aborigines in Rockhampton earlier this year by a supposed Ku Klux Klan style group." Also excluded from the Inquiry's terms of reference were matters concurrently under consideration by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

The media publicity given to several specific acts of racist violence appears to have been a catalyst for the decision to undertake the Inquiry. The

majority of incidents of publicized violence had been perpetrated against human rights activists, publicly supporting anti-apartheid, aboriginal land rights, immigration and multicultural causes. Indeed, the Race Discrimination Commissioner had herself fallen victim to racist graffiti which was believed to have been spray-painted by the extreme right-wing group, National Action.

In some instances, individuals (such as a Uniting Church Minister who was an anti-apartheid advocate) were subjected to repeated and diverse forms of harassment (burnt effigies, hate mail, graffiti attacks, etc.) over several months. Such repeated harassment has been linked to the activities of extreme right, racist organizations such as National Action, Australian League of Rights, the Australian Nationalist Movement and several neo-Nazi groups. In terms of the perpetrators of racist violence, the Inquiry was "not out to investigate any groups or organizations" but rather "criminal acts with specific links to race as their prime motive elements". Also the victims were conceived to be "Aborigines and Islanders, people from a non-English speaking background and people who work to support human rights."

The Inquiry involved two levels of investigation. First, written submissions to the Inquiry were invited to provide information about actual incidents of racist violence. Submissions, numbering close to 200 in total, were solicited through newspaper advertisement and mail-outs. They were authored by Aboriginal organizations and individuals, ethnic community associations, anti-racist activists who had been subjected to attacks, and people expressing their opinions about the sources for racist violence. An additional 200 submissions were group questionnaires, filled out by members of migrant groups in the context of meetings convened by the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

The second level of investigation involved a series of public hearings held in Sydney, Melbourne, Townsville, Adelaide and Perth. Separate hearings were held for Aboriginal groups in order to respect the integrity of the determination of Aboriginal groups "not to be lumped in with people from ethnic communities" and because of the different questions raised by the reality of racist violence for Aboriginal people and migrants, respectively. For Aboriginal people, the problem of racist violence is linked most strongly with the coercive behaviour of police forces present in Aboriginal communities. It is worth noting, however, that one report based on a series of discussions held in community languages with members of Lao, Chinese, Arabic, Tongan and Vietnamese communities also found that "police violence based on race came through as the most serious area of concern."

In addition to seeking public input, the Inquiry is relying on commissioned research which is examining the following issues: theories of racism and racist violence, racist violence in six Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal-police relations in New South Wales and Queensland, racism in the media, and the climate of racist opinion (activities of extremist groups, the role of interventions by politicians in immigration debates).

The Inquiry is expected to report in March or April 1990. From the outset, the Inquiry's Commissioners[3] criticized the lack of coordination between state, federal and territory police forces in working out methods to combat racism. It is expected that one set of recommendations will address the role of police forces in recording and responding to incidents of racist violence, as well as the character of policing in Aboriginal communities.

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[3]A co-commissioner, Ron Caston QC, was appointed to take part in the conduct of the public hearings.

The Community Relations Campaign[4]

The National Agenda on Multiculturalism announced that the Commonwealth Government would be launching a Community Relations campaign. The campaign had three aims:

(1) to raise awareness of the desirability of combatting prejudice within the community as manifested in illegal or offensive behaviour by individuals or groups based on race, ethnicity, religion, language or historical events;

(2) to foster a greater degree of acceptance of and respect for people of different races, ethnicity, religion, culture or language; and

(3) through these efforts, to encourage a greater awareness of the benefits of harmonious community relations in a multicultural society.

The budget for this campaign is $5.7 million over 3 years: $0.55 m in 1989-90; $2.65 m in 1990-91; and $2.40 m in 1991-92, to be administered through the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA). A Working Party was formed in August 1989 to develop the strategy, with representatives from OMA, DILGEA, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

The Working Party is waiting for the results of the Inquiry into Racist Violence before announcing its strategy on community relations. The Community Relations strategy is meant to deal with issues that are much wider than racist violence - related to behaviour and practices associated with ethnic, religious, cultural, and other forms of diversity.

At the time of writing, the Campaign had embarked on an information-gathering process, relying on commissioned research. Three projects were

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[4]Information about the Community Relations Strategy was gathered at a seminar on the Strategy organized by the Office of Multicultural Affairs on December 1, 1989, which the author attended as observer.

underway examining: the policies of other countries of dealing with racial and ethnic tensions; an overview of interventionist strategies in Australia responding to community tensions; and the development of a system of measuring the incidence of behaviour associated with racial and ethnic tensions.

A half-day seminar was organized by OMA in December 1989 which brought together officials in several government departments, representatives from the Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs, and academics. Participants at the seminar (attended by the author) discussed the obvious difficulties associated with devising quantitative measures of such a multi-faceted, complex phenomenon as the "state of community relations". The idea that one can measure a given state of community relations, introduce a strategy for behavioural change, and then measure the results seems to be an underlying assumption in this campaign.

Such thinking contradicts the findings of the vast majority of research on community relations. In an excellent discussion of community relations, Allbrook et al. (1988) argue for the need of policy-makers to have a clear understanding of the definition of "poor community relations" as it relates to social structures and social inequalities. What constitutes poor community relations will 'invariably depend upon an individual's position in the social structure.' It is worthwhile quoting their argument extensively:

> Many Australians are disturbed by prejudice, discrimination and other manifestations of racism which are widely evident in the community. This may be perceived as a behavioural problem which can be changed by raising awareness, education or, if all else fails, by coercive legislation. For others, often those who are the 'victims' of racism, community relations are perpetuated by an exploitative labour market, exclusion from participation or being able to benefit from the affairs and resources of

the society and other factors which reinforce their minority group status. Strategies to improve community relations in these schema must take account of the structural inequities which maintain the 'lesser status' of minority groups (Allbrook et al., 1988:28-29).

The stated objectives of the community relations strategy aim at changing attitudes, and indirectly behaviour, rather than factors associated with structural inequities. Its emphasis on achieving measurable results within a short space of time appears to fly in the face of the prevailing wisdom among researchers and community activists that "there are no easy remedies for the problems posed by poor community relations and any changes that are possible through intervention strategies will necessarily be long term. [And further,] that programs which aim solely at attitudinal change constitute an inefficient use of public resources" (Allbrook et al., 1988:29). This emphasis is consistent, however, with the trend within Australian multiculturalism and Commonwealth policy more generally, to direct spending in policies with measurable results (e.g., gains in productivity and economic efficiency). Some participants at the December 1989 seminar felt that it was impossible to have a major behavioural change campaign costing only $5.7 million. It was agreed that "community relations" was a nebulous concept and participants were unclear and divided on how to proceed in promoting positive community relations.

By early February 1990, the Working Party had not yet reached a decision about the direction to be taken by the Community Relations campaign. Some members wished to channel the resources into ongoing projects such as the Race Relations in the Workplace project run by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Other parties, however, felt that the campaign should not fund ongoing projects, but rather initiate a national strategy that would be "splashy

and new". In an earlier decision, however, the Working Party had rejected the idea of a national media campaign, on the grounds that it would be costly and almost certainly have little lasting impact. The Working Party is scheduled to develop a detailed strategy by March - April 1990.

Table 1.

Student Characteristics, Home Tutor Scheme, May 1989

		Wollongong	Wyong	Newcastle	Sydney		Total
					North	West	
Sex	Female	85.8%	70.7%	78.4%	86.9%	83.9%	84.0%
	Male	14.2%	29.3%	21.6%	13.1%	16.1%	16.0%
	Sub-total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Number	113	75	102	488	461	1239
Age	16-24 Yrs	8.9%	4.0%	7.8%	6.6%	8.5%	7.5%
	25-34 Yrs	46.4%	32.0%	30.4%	44.3%	41.0%	41.4%
	35-44 Yrs	25.9%	29.3%	41.2%	29.1%	25.8%	28.6%
	45-54 Yrs	8.9%	13.3%	5.9%	8.2%	7.0%	8.0%
	55-64 Yrs	8.9%	14.7%	6.9%	5.8%	8.5%	7.7%
	+65 Yrs	0.9%	6.7%	7.8%	6.0%	9.2%	6.9%
	Sub-total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Number	112	75	102	485	446	1220
Period of Residence	< 6 months	3.5%	1.3%	3.9%	1.7%	4.7%	3.1%
	6 mths < 1 yr	6.2%	13.3%	16.7%	10.4%	9.3%	10.3%
	1 yr < 2 yrs	21.2%	21.3%	17.6%	21.2%	15.1%	18.6%
	2 yrs < 3 yrs	14.2%	18.7%	9.8%	17.6%	16.6%	16.4%
	3 yrs < 5 yrs	14.2%	8.0%	11.8%	18.0%	18.2%	16.6%
	5 yrs < 10 yrs	28.3%	25.3%	26.5%	21.0%	19.1%	21.7%
	10 yrs < 20 yrs	10.6%	9.3%	13.7%	8.7%	15.1%	11.7%
	20 yrs & over	1.8%	2.7%	0.0%	1.5%	2.0%	1.6%
	Sub-total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Number	113	75	102	482	451	1223
Country of Birth	Northern Europe	2.7%	14.7%	11.8%	8.6%	5.5%	7.5%
	Southern Europe	22.1%	4.0%	17.6%	12.1%	5.0%	10.4%
	Middle East	20.4%	10.7%	2.9%	34.8%	40.2%	31.4%
	Sth & Ctrl America	18.6%	12.0%	11.8%	6.8%	15.3%	11.7%
	Africa (exc. Egypt)	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	0.6%	0.4%	0.7%
	Asia	34.5%	52.0%	53.9%	36.9%	33.2%	37.6%
	Other (Incl.Oceania)	1.8%	1.3%	2.0%	0.2%	0.4%	0.6%
	Sub-total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Number	113	75	102	488	458	1236

Continued

** Note: Information on Student Characteristics was collected from student record cards during May, 1989. The data from Wollongong and Sydney offices include current students and those waiting for tutors. The number of students waiting for placement with tutors at each of those offices were: Wollongong 14, Parramatta 197 and North Sydney 79. Newcastle and Wyong are current students only.

Source: J.M. Palser & V.E. Sandinata, Longer Term Resident Clients in the NSW Adult Migrant Education Service, NSW Adult Migrant Education Service, 1989.

Student Characteristics, Home Tutor Scheme, May 1989 (continued)

		Wollongong	Wyong	Newcastle	Sydney		Total
					North	West	
Years of Schooling	None	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	2.5%	1.1%
	1-4 yrs	0.9%	4.2%	7.9%	5.3%	7.8%	6.0%
	5-9 yrs	43.4%	22.5%	42.6%	24.5%	33.6%	31.0%
	10-14 yrs	38.1%	50.7%	37.6%	51.9%	44.9%	46.8%
	15-19 yrs	17.7%	19.7%	9.9%	17.2%	10.8%	14.5%
	20 yrs & over	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	1.1%	0.2%	0.7%
	Sub-total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Number	113	71	101	470	434	1189
Previous English in Australia	Yes	43.4%	39.7%	59.8%	47.1%	53.6%	49.8%
	No	56.6%	60.3%	40.2%	52.9%	46.4%	50.2%
	Subtotal	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Number	113	73	102	473	440	1201
English NOT in Australia	Yes	25.7%	34.2%	35.3%	55.2%	34.7%	42.0%
	No	74.3%	65.8%	64.7%	44.8%	65.3%	58.0%
	Sub-total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Number	113	73	102	471	427	1186
Employment Status	Employed	22.1%	26.7%	36.6%	18.7%	14.8%	19.7%
	Unemployed	59.3%	32.0%	15.8%	8.5%	10.3%	16.1%
	Not in Workforce	18.6%	41.3%	47.5%	72.8%	74.9%	64.1%
	Sub-total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Number	113	75	101	470	418	1177
Proficiency of English (Speaking)	0	18.6%	24.0%	30.4%	34.1%	33.5%	31.5%
	0+	15.9%	9.3%	12.7%	15.0%	24.0%	17.8%
	1-	16.8%	12.0%	15.7%	18.7%	13.9%	16.1%
	1	31.0%	12.0%	21.6%	18.5%	12.1%	17.2%
	1+	15.9%	26.0%	13.7%	12.1%	12.4%	13.7%
	2	1.8%	13.3%	4.9%	1.2%	3.6%	3.2%
	3	0.0%	1.3%	1.0%	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%
	4	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Sub-total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Number	113	75	102	481	445	1216

** Note: Information on Student Characteristics was collected from student record cards during May, 1989.
The data from Wollongong and Sydney offices include current students and those waiting for tutors.
The number of students waiting for placement with tutors at each of those offices were:
Wollongong 14, Parramatta 197 and North Sydney 79.
Newcastle and Wyong are current students only.

Table 2 - Employed Persons by Industry and Birthplace, August 1986

	MALES		
	Aust.-born	MES	NES
Total in thousands	3093	481	606
INDUSTRY GROUP	%	%	%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	8.7	1.8	3.4
Manufacturing	17.3	21.7	30.1
Construction	9.5	11.5	12.6
Wholesale and retail trade	18.7	18.6	17.9
Transport and storage	8.1	7.0	6.5
Finance, property and business services	8.6	13.0	7.1
Community services	10.8	12.8	7.7
Recreation, personal and other services	4.7	4.8	5.3
Other	13.5	10.6	9.5
TOTAL	100	100	100

	FEMALES		
	Aust.-born	MES	NES
Total in thousands	2055	313	338
INDUSTRY GROUP	%	%	%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	4.7	2.3	3.2
Manufacturing	8.9	11.4	25.7
Construction	2.5	2.7	2.1
Wholesale and retail trade	23.0	20.4	21.1
Transport and storage	2.6	2.3	2.4
Finance, property and business services	13.0	12.3	9.8
Community services	28.9	33.7	22.0
Recreation, personal and other services	9.6	9.6	7.9
Other	6.9	5.3	5.8
TOTAL	100	100	100

Source: DIEA 1986, Table 5

Stephen Castles et al., "Migrant Employment and Training and Industry Restructuring", OMA, 1988.

APPENDIX 1

PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS IN EWP BY LOCATION

STATE/TERRITORY: NSW

SECTOR	ORGANISATION	LOCATION
Private	ALCATOL	Alexandria
	Australian Construction Services	Chatswood
	Australian Paper Manufacturers	Smithfield
	FORD	Homebush
	Hilton	Sydney (City)
	Humes ARC	Lidcombe
	James Hardie	Camellia
	Johnson and Johnson	Botany
	JRA	Revesby
	Kellogs	Pagewood
	St Vincents Hospital	Darlinghurst
	The Boulevard	Kings Cross
	WAMAC	Mascot
	Westpac	Sydney (City)
Commonwealth	Aust Bureau of Statistics	Sydney (City)
	Aust Taxation Office	Parramatta
	Australia Post	Turrella
	Concord Repatriation Hospital	Concord
	Dept of Social Security	Sydney (City)
	Dept of Veterans Affairs	Sydney (City)
	Garden Island	Alexandria
	QANTAS	Mascot
	SBS	Milsons Point
State	Cumberland Hospital	Parramatta
	Dept of Education	Sydney (City)
	Dept of Housing	Liverpool
	Government Printers	Ultimo
	Land Titles Office	Sydney (City)
	Lidcombe Hospital	Lidcombe
	Prince Henry Hospital	Little Bay
	Public Works	Sydney (City)
	St George Hospital	Kogarah
	State Compensation Board	Rosebury
	State Rail Authority	Sydney (City)
	Water Board	Bondi
	Westmead Hospital	Westmead
Other	ACCA	Sydney South

PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS IN EWP BY INDUSTRY TYPE

STATE/TERRITORY: SA

SECTOR	ORGANISATION	INDUSTRY TYPE
Private	General Motors Holden's Automotive Ltd	Automotive
	Bridgestone Australia Ltd	Auto components
	* ROH Industries Ltd	Auto components
	* Castalloy Ltd	Auto & other components
	AEM Cores Ltd	Elect motor components
	Oliveri Industries Ltd	S/Steel kitchen/bathroom fittings
	Wakefield Memorial Hospital	Health
	* Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd	Automotive
State	Royal Adelaide Hospital	General/Teaching
	Glenside Hospital	Mental health
	Queen Victoria Hospital	Maternity health
	Julia Farr Centre	Incurables
	Hampstead Centre	Incurables
	Hillcrest Hospital	Mental health
	Engineering and Water Supply Department	
	* Australian National Railways	
	Migrant Adult Retraining Centre	Unemployed NESB - Public funding

(* In development. Courses to start March-June period)

PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS IN EWP BY INDUSTRY TYPE

STATE/TERRITORY: TAS

SECTOR	ORGANISATION	INDUSTRY TYPE
Private	Cadbury Schweppes Pty Ltd (EWP course to be offered)	Food processing
State	Royal Hobart Hospital (discussions to probable recommencement of previous course type)	Health

APPENDIX 2

MEMBERSHIP OF NACSR

Sir William Keys AC OBE MC (chairperson)

- age 66; lives in Queanbeyan; former National President of RSL; member, Advisory Committee on Multicultural Affairs.

Jenny Acton

- age 33; Senior Industrial Officer, ACTU

John Fiocco

- age 40; Barrister and Solicitor (WA)

Marion Gluck

- age 39; lives in NSW; medical degree from West Germany (unrecognised in Aust).

Professor Helen Hughes AO

- age 61; Head of Development Studies Centre, ANU.

Tuong Quang Luu

- age 49; Head of SBS Radio (based in NSW); former senior DILGEA officer; former Vietnam refugee.

Naya Narayanan

- age 50; Indian; Economics lecturer at University of WA; chairman of Ethnic Communities Council of WA.

Carmel Niland AM

- age 45; member of the NSW migrant Employment and Qualifications Board (nominee on NACSR of NSW Premier).

Professor Gareth Roberts

- age 61; NSW; distinguished professional and academic architect; chairman of NOOSR Expert Panel in Architecture

Bernard Ryan

- age 51; Director of Industrial Training, WA Dept. of Employment and Training

John Rowling (ex-officio member)

- Director of NOOSR

In addition, Mr Dawkins will be appointing a further member with a business background and the Victorian Government is expected to nominate a representative.

Official Observers

Representatives of the Ministers of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, and Industrial Relations

Unofficial Observer

Office of Multicultural Affairs, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Table 3: Applications for Trade Assessment From Criteria Countries considered by the Technical Adviser Service in 1988-89*

Country	Applications considered	Accepted	Refused	Deferred or lapsed
Argentina	64	17	47	-
Austria	19	12	7	-
Belgium	2	-	2	-
Bolivia	-	-	-	-
Brazil	6	1	5	-
Brunei	34	11	16	7
Canada	66	47	17	2
Chile	94	6	88	-
Colombia	9	3	6	-
Denmark	112	80	23	9
Ecuador	1	-	1	-
Fiji	252	83	131	38
Finland	-	-	-	-
France	6	2	4	-
Germany (Federal Republic of,)	103	80	23	-
Greece	39	5	34	-
Hong Kong	120	41	64	15
India	77	28	38	11
Ireland (Republic of	505	329	151	25
Italy	13	-	13	-
Japan	15	4	10	1
Korea (Republic of)	73	17	35	21
Malaysia	256	39	161	56
Malta	15	1	14	-
Netherlands	22	7	14	1
New Zealand	21	10	5	6
Norway	-	-	-	-
Paraguay	1	-	1	-
Peru	7	2	5	-
Philippines	124	42	67	15
Poland	37	20	17	-
Portugal	48	4	44	-
Singapore	177	96	78	3
Spain	25	8	14	3

Source: Administration of the Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act Annual Report 1988-89, DIR Annual Report 1988-89.

APPENDIX 2, LIST OF CRITERIA COUNTRIES con.

Country	Applications considered	Accepted	Refused	Deferred or lapsed
Sri Lanka	2	1	1	-
Sweden	15	12	3	-
Switzerland	89	56	27	6
Turkey	64	20	36	8
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	3531	1888	1309	334
Uruguay	15	3	9	3
United States of America	132	64	49	19
Venezuela	13	2	1	10
Yugoslavia	31	24	7	-
Total	**6235**	**3065**	**2577**	**593**

* Full statistics relating to cases considered by the Technical Adviser Service, Canberra during the first quarter of 1988-89 are not available. It is estimated that, during this period, 700 applications were considered.

Additionally, the Technical Adviser Service commenced processing applications from non-criteria countries in May 1989 following the Tregillis Review. By the end of the financial year, 166 non-criteria applications had been processed.

Consequently, the Technical Adviser Service considered approximately 7100 cases during 1988-89.

APPENDIX 3

Summary of Characteristics: Employees who were Trade Union Members
November 1976, March to May 1982, August 1986, Australia

Characteristics	November 1976 Number of members ('000)	November 1976 Prop. of all emplys in same cat. (%)	March to May 1982 Number of members ('000)	March to May 1982 Prop. of all emplys in same cat. (%)	August 1986 Number of members ('000)	August 1986 Prop. of all emplys in same cat. (%)
Birth Place:						
Australia	1,833.7	50	1,803.6	48	1,899.0	45
Outside Australia	596.7	58	764.0	55	694.9	48
Main Eng. Spk Country	217.2	49	295.3	48	293.5	44
U.K. or Ireland	248.1	54	248.0	48	244.6	47
Can. USA NZ S.Africa	26.5	36	47.3	43	48.9	33
Non Eng Spk Countries	379.5	64	468.7	60	401.4	53
Germany	24.3	48	23.8	44	21.3	43
Greece	55.1	66	42.4	71	32.5	60
Italy	62.7	62	89.5	67	60.5	59
Yugoslavia	53.6	69	65.5	75	60.2	72
Other	208.7	58	247.6	56	227.0	48

Source: George Miltenyi, "Trade Unions in a Multicultural Workforce", OMA, 1988.

INTERVIEWS

Structured, open-ended interviews were conducted with the following individuals, identified by organization, position, date and city of interview. Informants are listed in alphabetical order.

Anna Booth, Federal Secretary, Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union, November 16, 1989, Canberra.

Alex Bozic, Senior Executive Officer, Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Section, Department of Industrial Relations, January 5, 1990, Canberra (telephone interview).

John Brennan, Coordinator of Projects Branch, Policy Development and Implementation, NSW Ethnic Affairs Commission, October 19, 1989, Sydney.

Graham Burke, Assistant Secretary, Industry Development No. 2 Branch, Department of Industrial Relations, Canberra.

Suzy Coleman, Assistant Director, Federation of Ethnic Communities Council in Australia (FECCA), October 17, 1989, Sydney.

Phil Clarke, Supervisor of Review of Commonwealth Licensing Practices, Department of Industrial Relations, February 5, 1989, Canberra (telephone interview).

Trevor Griffiths, Assistant Secretary, Settlement and Planning Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, November 24, 1989, Canberra.

Robyn Iredale, Research Director, Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, October 17, 1989, Sydney.

Lydia Jerkovic, Organizer, Clothing and Allied Trades Union, Victoria Branch, December 2, 1989.

Ilona Lee, Coordinator, Multicultural Centre, Sydney College of Advanced Education, October 12, 1989, Sydney.

Eric Lloga, Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission, (Overseas Qualifications), December 12, 1989, Melbourne.

Peter Mackintosh, Director, Technical Adviser Service, Department of Industrial Relations, November 23, 1989, Canberra.

Barbara Marshall, Principal of External Programs, NSW Adult Migrant Education Services, November 28, 1989, Sydney.

Alan Matheson, Ethnic Liaison Officer, Australian Confederation of Trade Unions, December 11, 1989, Melbourne.

Michael Murphy, Principal Adviser, TAFE and Skills Formation Division, Department of Employment, Education and Training, January 4, 1990, Canberra.

Stephen Nugent, Secretary to Inquiry into Racist Violence, Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, October 20, 1989, Sydney.

Joanne Palser, Research Analyst, NSW Adult Migrant Education Service, November 6, 1989, Sydney.

George Papadapoulos, Chairperson, Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission, December 8, 1989, Melbourne.

Don Plimer, Director, Language Services, Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, November 24, 1989, Canberra.

John Rowling, Director, National Office of Overseas Qualifications, November 9, 1989, Canberra.

Paul Schroder, Ethnic Liaison Officer, Victoria Trades Hall Council, December 2, 1989, Melbourne.

Peter Vaughn, Acting First Secretary, Office of Multicultural Affairs, October 31, 1989.

Margaret Willis, Assistant Director, NSW Adult Migrant Education Service, November 28, 1989, Sydney.

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In addition to the above interviews, the author also attended the following meetings or group interview sessions:

Monthly meeting of Network of Ethnic Women, organized by Franca Arena, Member of Parliament, New South Wales, November 27, 1989, Sydney.

Seminar on Community Relations Campaign, organized by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, December 1, 1989, Canberra.

Group Discussion with migrant women organizers and staff at the Clothing and Allied Trades Union, Victoria Branch, December 2, 1989, Melbourne.

Group Discussion with NES instructors of Women in Industry, Contraception and Health (WICH), (which instructs migrant women in factories on health issues), December 13, 1989, Melbourne.

Race Relations in the Workplace Seminar, organized by the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, December 12, 1989, Melbourne.

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